

ENGLISH SUMMER

ENGLISH UMMER

CORNELIA
STRATTON
PARKER

ILLUSTRATED



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NEW YORK

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO JUNE

Who Wore Exceedingly Well



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ENGLISH
SUMMER



CHAPTER I

WONDER OF WONDERS, ALIVE IN SHERE; TEA AT DEEPPDENE;
BEDS IN THE DUSK AND ROMANCE OF PENSHURST



IF WE seem to begin with Shere in Surrey it is not because Shere was the first village we passed through or the first worth describing or the first of any importance. It was merely the first of anything I saw clearly in England after leaving London. Before Shere we might have come upon Canterbury, Winchester, Chester, Oxford and Cambridge rolled into one. The result would have been a total loss as far as I was concerned. I had had ten driving lessons the last rushed weeks in America from an aging but patient teacher who smoked strong cigars and gave his instructions ("gave" of course used loosely) in a car of uncertain make and years. I had no license—there had been no time to take an examination. My family—they tell me all families are alike in this respect—were rather open in their scepticism as to how much good it would do me to try.

We crossed on a slow boat and I used the sun and salt air as possible aids to confidence for what lay ahead. Had our steamer suddenly rammed another in mid-ocean, my instantaneous reaction would have been: "There now, I knew I never could remember to stay on the left side of the road!" All the way across I forced myself to keep to the left side and fellow

passengers to my right going up and down stairs and along gang ways. I closed my eyes and regularly rehearsed gear shiftings.

Why bother to learn the art of gear shiftings in a land of overdone traffic and two stalwart sons who could and would drive you any place you desired to go? But the steamer was taking us to a country of quiet winding lanes and tucked-away thatched cottages; away, also, from the two stalwart sons who were remaining behind to help build up the depressed remains of their nation's ill-advised financial doings, incidentally hoping thereby to earn two meals a day. As between the thirteen-year-old daughter and myself, the laws of England forced the rôle of driver upon my aging frame. We both yearned to see England enough to trust that inadequate frame for a summer.

Of course, there is only one way to see England—on foot. But I have hardly more than another forty years to live, and besides all there is to look upon in England, there are some books I should like to write. Of course, the way to see England, if you are in a hurry, is on a bicycle. But figuring up all there was to behold, and some eighty or ninety days to behold it in, we should have had to average bicycling seventy to eighty miles a day, and at forty-five one's system might rebel. Twenty miles a day is heaven, but at that rate you would be seeing one county a year. Well, then, by a process of elimination, motor.

One hour in London, and a car bought. We followed the advice of some enlightened soul who had told us to follow the advice of the Royal Automobile Club, which was to buy a new, inexpensive car on the repurchase system—in other words, in our case, a £130 car on the guarantee that the agents took it back at the end of three months for seventy per cent of its cost price.

Cars are more swiftly bought than driven off in. Insurances . . . licenses . . . papers to sign . . . more papers to sign. . . . And then of course it was somebody's business to find out if I was a reputable woman. We could start off, the agent assured us, in two days. Two days more of life. We went to see the film

"All Quiet on the Western Front" that evening, as a soothing start to a motor trip when you did not know so much as the location of the brakes. That was Monday. ✓

Tuesday I called on the agent with the suggestion that he have some large, strong man, who had managed a car in England before, drive us through the London traffic and out onto some highway. "London is confusing if you don't know it." Seventeen London busses heading towards your destruction would be confusing.

Wednesday we were driven from the agent's to our hotel in our very own maroon-colored, open Austin seven—"Baby Austin"—touring. It took up just about as much space as a cow, except that cows soared above us in height (I write from over eighty days of character-strengthening experience with cows).

Anon we wove our way out of London, feeling like a bug in the deep canyons of towering London bus traffic. I saw nothing but that driver's foot and hands; like a cat I watched his every move. Every turn of the wheels brought the moment nearer when he would be saying casually: "Now I think you'd better drive" and he would step out and leave us. Leave us! We should be alone in that car! Peace has its terrors. I could still speak, and suggested in my own voice that I might drive the car a bit before he got out. We had purred along in pretty style up to that time. The man got out; I moved over to his side; he got into my seat (a male person with legs has to intertwine and knot himself into an Austin Seven) and nobody but myself could have told it was the same vehicle.

"Now I think I'll be going back," I heard that man say. He probably had a wife and children. Fumblingly I clawed money out of my purse to pay him—such agony was upon me I could but dimly have marked the difference between a penny and a pound. As he turned to leave us, in my despairing eyes, as it were, the last sight of land, such a thunderstorm broke over the world, a superstitious soul would have surmised heaven set no trusting store by any such trip. The man helped us put

up the cover—you may remember the first time you put up the new cover in an inexpensive car. Water all but streamed off us. Bolts crashed from heaven, but, withal, the elements were dry and sylvan silence more musical than song compared to the inner tempest of my shaken heart.

“Goodbye,” the man called. I remember being dimly aware that I must have paid him enough, from the way he said “goodbye,” and then only Doré could have illustrated the next few miles. It poured. It thundered. We went through towns—interesting towns with sights to see. It is a blur of black gloom and misery and sick anguish to my soul, and a continual wonder why we weren’t being killed.

And then, somehow, as suddenly as it takes to tell, it came over me that I loved driving a car like nothing else on this earth, and there was Shere, and the sun, and we stopped.

How perfect to start an English summer with Shere! It is what you dream an English village will look like. We left the car parked rather far from the curbing (if Shere had a curbing) and in exuberance over being in that sort of an English village, and a bit of course over being alive at all, we flung ourselves upon Shere. We photographed everything . . . each of us . . . both kodaks. We called to each other to look at this; we squealed with joy over that. We thought we were the discoverers of Shere, the only people in the world outside of the inhabitants of Shere who knew Shere existed. And then to learn the man who wrote the Guide Book had seen it and labelled it “perhaps the prettiest village in Surrey.”

It was in Shere we thought to reverse and get back on the main road, and it was in Shere we learned the reverse to our car did not work. Well then, one went ahead, in the wrong direction, and saw fascinating corners we should have missed otherwise.

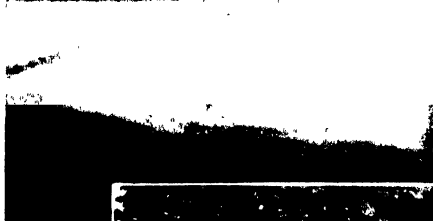
Of course, in a way there was no such thing this summer as the wrong direction. If you set out to see England, Scotland and Wales, it makes little difference what direction you go in. And yet, within strict limits, there has to be some order to life,



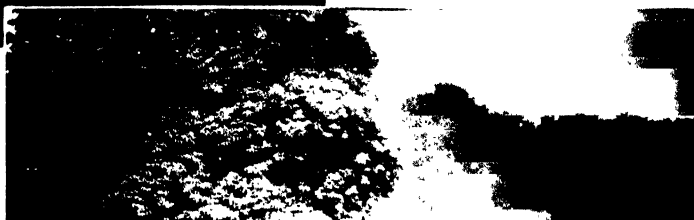
SHERE



DEEPDENE



DEEPDENE



unless arrangements can be made to live three thousand years. The general idea had been to make the trip as far as possible chronological, which was fairly easy to plan in the United States but difficult when it came to English roads. You say "We'll begin at Stonehenge"—2000 B.C. goes back far enough for superficial people like ourselves. But are you to find the straightest road possible from London to Stonehenge and look at nothing right or left? Jump to Roman Britain . . . are you going to make a dash from Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire to Hadrian's Wall at the very north of England? And then speed to Tintagel down on the Cornish coast to be ready for King Arthur? We modestly decided we would merely look upon all we could of the British Isles, North, South, East and West, and put our brains to sorting what we had beheld in its chronological order after the summer was over.

To list the blessings of the British Isles for the tourist is only an indirect object of this book. But my pen would scratch if I wrote further without a word or two of grateful notice as to what the Royal Automobile Club means in a motor traveler's life. From start to finish, literally, they were our ever-present help in time of—it didn't need to be actual—trouble. They did about everything but pay for the trip, and in a way they even had something of a hand in that. Their first act was to give us advice about buying cars and addresses of agents. Their last was to save us from a final overcharge of some six pounds which the agent we bought the car from attempted, on somewhat flimsy ground, to extort after everything was over. In between, they were our Rock to lean on, whenever we wanted to lean.

I had no thought of asking the R.A.C. about routes, feeling somewhat superior in the matter, but being often conversationally inclined I continually became involved in accepting all sorts of unsought advice from all sorts of people. Why, under the circumstances, I so often feel compelled to follow it I don't know, unless it is God's way of having mortals do what turns out to be good for them. I can't think what we should have

done without the special maps of England, Wales and Scotland the R.A.C. marked so wisely for us, and so well. We possessed two maps, the worn and frayed and in pieces map marked by the R.A.C. which we consulted a dozen times a day, and the map marked with the route we actually followed. We draped ourselves, as it were, in a general way along the markings of the R.A.C. with a dozen deviations a day. Sometimes we left out a whole region and substituted inspirations of our own.

During the first day as we drove along the red road to Dorking (the R.A.C. paints its suggested itinerary with a fine brush dipped in red ink), and my general outlook on life was such that I now could tell while moving whether we were passing a church or a "pub" I spied a sign which said *Deepdene* on it and pointed up a hill. No sooner were we by than that word began to fidget in my brain—and then I remembered that the kind R.A.C. man who had appointed himself advisor of our destinies had strongly recommended Deepdene. In fact, it came over me with exaltation, he had thoughtfully suggested Deepdene as the place where we might best stop the night, since on our first day of driving we might not feel like journeying farther. And there we were speeding by Deepdene, the driver feeling the day had hardly as yet begun. What miles we covered after Deepdene! "Turn back," pricked some good fairy in my conscience, "and have tea at Deepdene." No reverse! So we kept on until we could find space for a reverseless turning. And back up the hill to Deepdene we rode.

It is only twenty-three miles from London. Drive down some day, some sunny day, when the banks and hillsides of rhododendrons are in bloom, I beg you, and have tea in the gardens, or should I say the Park? Disraeli wrote much of "Coningsby" at Deepdene—not that I've ever read "Coningsby." I did read through his letters to see what he had to say about the place when it was new and a private estate (and incidentally hoping he would cast some light on how one could write a good part of a three volume novel, which was to stir England from end to end, while visiting). In 1840 after he had

married the wealthy and loyal Widow Lewis he wrote to his sister. (I wonder how often he used to write to his sister when he was young. I've never had any contact with boys who wrote almost daily to a sister. When a brotherly letter is written it is usually in a larger hand than normal with wide margins and generous space between the lines, making a somewhat meagre number of sentiments go a longer way.) However—Disraeli, who was given to penning an unheard of number of letters to his sister, wrote in 1840: "We have had a delightful visit to Deepdene. In the midst of romantic grounds and picturesque park, Hope has built, or rather is still building, a perfect Italian palace, full of balconies adorned with busts. On the front a terraced garden and within a hall of tessellated pavement of mosaics, which is to hold his choicest marbles."

Let me hastily remark that of all forms of domestic architecture which make no appeal to Parkers, pseudo-Italian palaces and tessellated pavements and busts rank down near the very bottom. I have never had much to do with new Italian palaces; they would still leave me cold; but by the time we seem eligible for admission, Italian palaces are always peeling and filled with worn and heavy mid-Victorian furniture. But those Deepdene gardens . . . !

I try to picture the merry Christmas party Disraeli described that same year with Deepdene in its Italian glory:

"Deepdene, Dec. 26, 1840.

"We arrived here a week ago, with our host and Adrian Hope (and fourteen guests). . . . Our party very merry and agreeable, and we have had many Christmas gambols, charades, and ghosts, and our princely host made all the ladies a Christmas box; to Mary Anne two beautiful specimens of Dresden china, a little gentleman in a cocked hat and full dress, and a most charming little lady covered with lace. . . ."

Gambols, charades, ghosts, lords and ladies and England's prime minister-to-be and a charming little china lady covered with lace. . . . Now they drive down from London for Saturday

night or a week-end at Deepdene Hotel, at prices which stagger Parkers, and dance. (Corkage two and six.)

The last Deepdene reference I could find in Disraeli's letters (it was George Arliss I kept seeing descending the Italian stairway, admiring the balconies adorned with busts) was September 1843:

"We returned from Deepdene this morning after a most agreeable visit, with beautiful weather.... I am writing and want a workroom...."

He wants a workroom when he writes at his old home, anyway, and perhaps more gets written per diem. At any rate the next year "Coningsby" appeared and was the talk of the English world.

Deepdene started us on what developed into one of the most enjoyable phases of our summer. It has become a truism for Americans to bemoan our own tealess existence. We are willing to let England keep her cathedrals and villages, but we feel that until we have nationally absorbed that most delightful, gregarious, and at the same time restful experience of the day, her afternoon tea, we lag far behind her in an understanding of how to live. "A festival," George Gissing calls it. "The mere chink of cups and saucers tunes the mind to happy repose."

As one journeys over the land there comes the realization that not only is drinking afternoon tea a soul-satisfying activity, but the sort of places in which a traveler can drink that afternoon tea may also be soul satisfying. By all means see cathedrals, castles, abbeys—but ah! what a tourist misses of the joys of England if he or she passes by the quaint and odd and fascinating and lovely corners (not that more than two of those adjectives fit as a rule the same place) in which tea is served!

One thing we learned early from Deepdene—that there would be all sorts of charming places which we could never afford to do more than pass by, if it meant eating a lunch or dinner there, overnight being out of the question, not only because of cost, but because of the time of day. Yet no matter what exorbitant prices an inn or hotel might charge for every-

thing else, tea would always be within our means. Indeed, outside of London and the big cities, there is practically one price for tea up and down the land, no matter what the fluctuations as to other charges. Tea under an old apple tree, tea in a panelled Tudor dining room—one shilling six pence (about thirty-five cents). Rarely did we ever pay two shillings; often we paid less than one and six.

The other phase of the tea habit which came to mean much in the enjoyment of our summer was the latitude it allowed us in hours. I know the number of people who will be horrified at the idea of tea at all, especially for the young (there are other colors for tea than black), and even more will be scandalized over an irregularity in meals. Who carved on sacred tablets the law of breakfast, lunch and dinner anyway, or say three meals a day, as if it held equal sanctity with the ten commandments, or possessed the inevitability of the law of gravitation? Not God, not Moses, not even George Washington. Indeed, to my notions, the further we retreat from any idea of "dinner" at any hour, and the nearer we approach a somewhat glorified late afternoon "tea" instead, by so much do we shorten the distance between man and his lost paradise.

Driving hours a day in a car does not give the same appetite that walking hours a day produces. Also, after an English breakfast, hunger does not so soon assail one's mortal frame as after fruit, coffee and toast. Therefore you are not ready for a meal in the middle of the day, unless you think you must eat one because you have been eating one for twenty, thirty, forty-eight or sixty-two years, and some fruit, chocolate, crackers and nuts, say, while driving along or sitting under a tree, allow for independence and inner comfort. Then you are ready for one elegant, or as Providence sends, English tea, which you consume at that tea place the least possible to pass by around tea time. And you order fresh berries and-or a large green salad with your tea, which comes in crisp, and never any dressing. I must ask some Englishman why one usually must initiate parliamentary proceedings to procure salad dressing.

You are not hungry again until next morning's bounteous English breakfast. Thus you never need to worry as to whether you will make an eligible sort of hotel in time for dinner. Tea is an elastic hour—from three to six-thirty you can call it tea. Dinner is more or less set—about seven. No one wants to stop driving in England as early as seven—the loveliest time on the road is from about six to nine, and still light as day. So all you need to think of after you have had tea is a bed, and you don't need to think of that for hours.

Lastly, an English hotel dinner is just about the most terrible thing on God's earth anyhow. And English teas are invariably good.

Which settles the whole discussion.

I have brought the subject of food into the picture early and at length. It is because we so soon settled upon a regime which meant we gave the minimum of time, thought and money to the matter for three months and enjoyed the maximum returns. If you have to eat much English food you will think about it a very great deal.

Perhaps any road south from London into Surrey and Kent once taken would appear just about the most desirable in England. When we finally prevailed upon ourselves at about nine o'clock that first night to stop driving, we decided that we had seen enough of fascination since Shere to justify the trip to England and the car. Most of the country and parts of the towns and certain of the villages we passed through were intoxicatingly lovely. All this charm effervesced with a slight headiness inside you. The afternoon turned into evening by courtesy of clocks only; the light summer evening became a sunset; scarcely a human being appeared upon the roads, only a stillness, and a slight haze, and the English countryside which over and over again this summer brought a pain for its very loveliness. . . . A few hours can amass riches all but unbearable for one mortal. . . .

Again it was the drunken feeling of it which would not let

me stop driving. We whirled off on any road in any direction; each was so appealing we would say: "Suppose we'd missed this!" And then of a sudden there was a great imposing English manor house in its wide park. Romance flung itself upon us. We could never leave that part of the world without seeing more of that mansion! Around the corner was another such English village as one dreams years on end of gazing upon, and a lighted inn, and there we knew a good God had been guiding us since we set sail twelve days before on the worthy ship *Caronia*.

We were in Penshurst in Kent, and the great manor house was Penshurst Place, ancestral seat of the Sidney family, birth-place of that "rare ornament of his age," Sir Philip Sidney himself, and now inhabited by the Lord de l'Isle and Dudley, of Sidney stock, and our inn was the "Leicester Arms." To have such an ending to the first day of summer . . . and five minutes before to have had no idea where you'd be finding a bed. . . . The more I travel the surer I am heaven never wants you to have an idea where you'll be finding a bed.

That evening in the dusk we sauntered about the bit of a village. It doesn't possess more than a handful of houses. "One of the most charming villages of Kent," indeed it is, and in the dusk achingly so. What an introduction to England for a thirteen-year-old girl! We prowled the little church yard, approached through an age-old beamed gate between two ancient half-timbered houses, only a cat out cruising and the world to ourselves. We passed through a great stone gateway along a field where a lone man was stacking hay. The dim evening smelt of it. We found another gateway with wrought iron gates, one slightly ajar, and crept in to such a garden as we had never seen, the colors and scents of flowers at that hour producing unusual effects; in the near distance to the left we could glimpse the great manor house.

The season to see all the world, except perhaps Swiss mountains, is late spring or early summer, and the time to see the world for romance and to give the imagination all the rein

it can use is dusk. In an early English summer dusk does not turn dark until ten or after. One blesses the habit of the English hotel world which never, or rarely, breakfasts before nine, and thereby allows for much rambling and exploration in those hours made for turning the present into the past, and yet provides sleep enough for the young. Penshurst was still "one of the most charming villages in Kent" the following noon, but the spell was that of a summer's day and not of a summer's dusk.

The story of England is not so much woven of its cities, nor its towns, nor its castles, nor its cathedrals, nor all of these put together; the underlying pattern is the English village. Villages in England, unlike the Continent, existed long before there were castles to guard them, and they went on their way after castles were in ruins. They grew up in a dim past when Roman roads were all the civilization England could boast, and they scorned the Roman roads. Byways and paths of their own were tracked down from village to village, with little rhyme and less reason for being exactly here instead of there, and the charm of the English road of today is that instead of following Roman logic, it has but made permanent those age-old weaving, winding trackways of the past. Certain hamlets turned into towns, and from towns to cities, but for the most part, up and down the countryside, there are still the dots of English villages, to the everlasting joy and thanksgiving of the traveler.

There is a certain similarity in what came to be more or less the typical English village. The cottages of the simple folk stood, for the most part, about the common or village green, and off to one side the great house of the squire or lord. There dawned an age when that house must needs play a military rôle with fortifications; then slowly peace and stability in the land, the moat filled up, and once again a lord's or squire's home, rather than his fort. Later than the lord or squire's house and the cottages came the village church. Usually it was the lord



PENSHURST



who built it and therein were laid the family dead, but it was a place of worship for the entire village.

The lord's house changed from century to century, and so too the church was apt to change—built onto, altered outside and in, rebuilt—but always its steeple dominating the village, the village dead in its quiet churchyard.

What the traveler is ever in search of is the village in which the cottages along the roadside or about the green still face the day with their centuries-old gabled and timbered fronts. Alas, over and over again an entire village going back its hundreds of years will show the passer-by nothing but ugly nineteenth century distortions plastered or bricked over Tudor charm. Again one to three houses only remain untouched out of twenty to fifty. Often enough to keep hopes continually high, which is still not saying it is any too often, there stands a village, mellow, timbered, irregular, the atmosphere of olden days waiting to be caught and held by the yearning stranger. But with few exceptions, in every village there is on all sides the riot of bloom and color which spells an English garden. Doubly fortunate were we then to begin our English summer in Penshurst, typical of an England of hundreds of years gone by, typical still of the England of today. The irregular grouping of houses, some, praise heaven, still timbered, the village church in its sheltered churchyard, the great manor house, perhaps possessed of more charm than any other great house in all England. At two o'clock we were at the imposing entrance gate, waiting for the treat of seeing its rich offerings within.

Penshurst Place is older than the Sidneys; it goes back to the Norman Conquest, and always a great and illustrious family has been living in it. Long ago in Norman times a Norman family named Penchester lived in what was then the manor house. In the fourteenth century, John de Pulteney, four times Mayor of London, acquired the estate and built his great house on the site of the old, receiving a license from the King for the necessary fortification. In the fifteenth century, Penshurst was bought by a son of Henry IV, who added much

to the Lord Mayor's plans. That Duke of Bedford dying childless, Henry VI, as cousin, fell heir to the manor, who granted it with a kingly gesture to the Duke of Buckingham. The third Duke of Buckingham incurred the displeasure of His Majesty Henry VIII, who cut off his head with another kingly gesture, and incidentally became thereby possessed of Penshurst.

Sir William Sidney was a valuable courtier, warrior, diplomat, recipient of many deserved rewards at the hands of his king. From Edward VI, grateful son of a grateful father, he received Penshurst, and thus it came into the hands of the Sidney family, famous mostly for Sir Philip, poet, statesman, soldier of the Queen. He may have been "a spirit without a spot," but more remarkable praise would seem to have been bestowed by his eminent and worthy tutor at Oxford, who was so proud of the share he had in the training of Philip Sidney that he left directions to have the fact recorded on his tombstone, Spenser, close friend of Sidney, is thought to have written his "Shepherd's Calendar" at Penshurst, and Ben Jonson wrote poetry about the place, if he didn't write it there.

So much for a bit of the varied and earlier background of our first great English mansion. We were to see many a fine manor house on our journey of thousands of miles about England; indeed the mere suspicion of a manor house in any locality had us scouring up hill and down dale until we had tracked it to its park. Many a swift enchanted moment we came upon one all unawares, as at Penshurst. Not because it was the first did Penshurst remain ever the most worth seeing, but because of the intrinsic value of what it had to offer. Pick up any book on mediæval architecture and you will likely read that its fourteenth century great hall is perhaps (some say "by far") the finest example of its kind in England. If you would give a setting to the life of olden times you could find no better background than the great hall at Penshurst, the carved wooden screen across one end leading through to the traditional three doorways; minstrel gallery above; the huge sixty-foot-high, timbered roof, once with the hole open to the sky for

smoke; underneath, the central fire of great logs stacked today, as five hundred years ago, against their iron grate; up the other end from the carved screen, the raised dais and the table where m'lord and lady sat; along the walls the heavy oaken tables of the retainers. How easy to picture here that Christmas when once, tradition has it, the Black Prince and Joan his bride, "the Fair Maid of Kent," dined in this very hall. We can sense the bustle, hear the songs, be, with small effort, part of the lusty carousal of that feast.

Trace the development of the English hall from mediæval to modern days and you have history. When man first outgrew caves and huts, his first home of pretensions was a hall and kitchen, a kitchen in which to prepare the food to keep a family alive, a hall for the eating of it. Nor was the hall merely for dining, but a place in which to live and sleep and to be born and die—for such as died in their beds. And it was in good part the hall which allowed as many to die in their beds as ever did, since it was the refuge and protection of its inmates in those unsettled centuries. Considering the number of people who slept, ate and lived in the hall, it may not have been altogether a hardship that windows, being very small for protection, knew no glass. If daylight entered in, so did the fresh winds.

Men's standards of comfort and their ability to defend themselves grew apace, and rooms were slowly added to the hall. If a castle, additional rooms were built over the hall; if a manor house, alongside. By the time any idea of bedrooms developed they were, in a castle, hardly more than closets in the thick walls; in a manor house they were of wood and plaster, and have fallen away, leaving only the hall, which was built more solidly. (We saw such a hall standing alone in a field in Oakham, handsome, solid, still secure, everything else vanished.) But for long years only my lord and lady and the immediate family could boast bedrooms. The household at large slept in the great hall; men, women and children, and

everybody, as mentioned, ate there. (How happy Thoreau would have found the arrangement!)

Gradually additions were built onto the kitchen end of the hall of the manor house. The family rooms at the other end grew in number, size and comfort, which meant the approach of the days of Queen Elizabeth and internal peace. Outer windows were still small because there was still danger of attack, inner or court windows larger, and the well-to-do could boast horn or even glazing set in lead. Earlier, a king, and he was Henry III, could order glass to be substituted in the Queen's chamber in place of wooden shutters only, "so that the chamber might not be so windy." If a queen's chamber needed royal orders for glass back in the end of the thirteenth century, it was not in the possession of the likes of you and me.

Then came Elizabeth and security, and the day of the great mansion, and a hall to delight our eyes, with window after window, window over window, outside and on the court. There were living quarters and bedrooms aplenty for the fine family, now hung with soft tapestries or paneled, instead of the thin coat of plaster, whitewashed or painted, as in days gone by. The kitchen end of the house was a series of additional rooms, planned however for the comfort of the family rather than the servants.

Time sees the family living more and more in their end of the house, servants in theirs, until finally the hall is but a vestibule, a passage way to get from one set of rooms to another. We have reached Victoria. Add, if you please, a bath room, and we have the modern home. But if you could have a Tudor Hall *and* a bath room. . . .

The great hall at Penshurst was mellow and smoked almost two hundred years before Elizabeth was born. If it could tell all it had seen of life—and death! It is a generous owner who allows the public to share for a moment something of the richness of ages in his personal possession. When you consider the value of these possessions you can lightly remark: "He should allow the public to share them!" When you watch



NORMAN
KEEP
ROCHESTER



CHIDDINGSTONE

the public swarming day in, day out, 'round, over and about priceless relics of the past, you appreciate the other side of the story. Thank you, Lord de l'Isle and Dudley, for your generosity in sharing Penshurst!

CHAPTER 2

CHIDDINGSTONE UNTOUCHED; ROCHESTER ALL BUT RUINED;
CANTERBURY INSULTED; WE PREFER THE OLD HOUSE IN SAND-
WICH TO DOVER CASTLE AS A HOME



PENSHURST being entirely off our route to Canterbury, we finally prevailed upon ourselves, after explorations up hill and down dale in the car which seemed well nigh impossible to stay out of, to put ourselves back where we belonged, which we proceeded to do via Chiddingstone.

What I really enjoy writing is a diary. Only then can I use the adjectives my soul yearns to use, describe a place as it should be described according to my notions. The rest of my life, day in day out, is an eternal effort to suppress my enthusiasms to the point where I can be tolerated. And at that I can't suppress enough for toleration at the hands of many. When I grow weary of the struggle, I can picture myself, had I been born in the days of Job, tearing my hair and rending my garments and rolling in the dirt and ashes, wailing to God to demand why I should have been so accursed. Age—age doesn't help a bit.

Here is Chiddingstone. Somebody could look at Chiddingstone and say: "It's a nice little place," and if he were to describe it in writing, he might look up a less used word than "nice," yet something with a mild and contained meaning. Here

am I, re-living the winding road of trees and fields and hills to Chiddingstone, the way down to the village, the village as it looked that Thursday afternoon. And all the while, before I dare write about it, God is saying to me: "There, there now—quiet. Hold yourself in! No, no, not such adjectives as those! Say something like 'Chiddingstone is—is a nice little place.'"

Chiddingstone is a nice little place. There are about six houses down one side of the road; across the road is the churchyard and the church. At the foot of the road, where it turns at right angles, is the old manor house of the Streatfields in the park behind its stone wall. That is all there is of Chiddingstone.

My diary reads: "Looked like rain but sky cleared and we drove on through divine country to the most fascinating dot of a village, Chiddingstone, with about six ancient, mostly beamed, houses on one street, the Castle Inn so perfect and appealing a bit, I've *got* to stay there some day. As it was, while only three, we had to have tea on the bricked roadside next the inn door, the great wrought-iron park gate just behind us, the soft and silent churchyard with its hoary trees across the way."

We tried to see Knole, justly famed manor house of the Sackville family, and on the order of Penshurst, but we had spent too long clambering about Chiddingstone and taking pictures and drinking an unearthly early tea, and Knole had closed ten minutes before we arrived there. Nor was it the day to see Ightham Mote, which is a moated manor house only twenty-six miles from London no one should miss—and Parkers missed it. We bore on to Rochester.

To describe the approach to Rochester needs no self-restraint—for the most part it was to us a bore. The thought of the fat-kidneyed rascal Falstaff on Gad's Hill can cheer the traveler, and if he has seen Henry IV recently that gay scene can cheer him much. It was a few days after Rochester that we saw Henry IV played at Bedales School in Petersfield, the Gad's Hill double robbery being one of the high joys of the occasion.

—"Peace, ye fat guts! lie down; lay thine ear close to the ground and list if thou canst hear the tread of travelers."

"Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down?"—asks Falstaff of the Prince of Wales.

At least the roads are good—no cause for Falstaff's groanings about "eight yards of uneven ground being three score and ten miles afoot" with him. At the top of Gad's Hill is the red brick Gad's Hill Place where Dickens died.

The immediate environs of Rochester are worse than boring; they cause suffering—"hideously disfigured" by cement works. Ah Kentish countryside, where art thou?

But there loomed the great Norman Keep above the river, cause and object of our being where we were. Perhaps it is the very finest in all England. It was June's first Norman castle—the Tower of London she had seen too many years before to remember. Boys of thirteen would take to Norman castles, I'm guessing, with more enthusiasm than to Tudor manor houses, but to a girl of thirteen a Norman castle, always in ruins, is an anti-climax after a manor house like Penshurst. It was interesting to travel with a girl when all my previous roamings had been done with boys. There's a difference. I wonder how parents manage who go journeying with both at the same time. At Penshurst I watched June stand fascinated in front of one of those pieces of furniture royalty and nobility always seemed to be getting presented with and nobody ever ordered for himself. You open two painted and inlaid doors, and inside are any number of small drawers, all painted and inlaid, and usually a mirror in a recess. Heaven above knows what a king or a duke ever put in the drawers and how he could ever again locate what once had been deposited, especially if, as usually seemed to be the case, he had been presented with some eleven similar pieces. But evidently to a girl of thirteen the possibilities of such an article of furniture are simply limitless. A boy that age would give one snort and start peering around for a bit of sensible armor.

Not only could a Norman castle ruin be an anti-climax to

an occupied Tudor manor house, but all summer practically every city tended to be an anti-climax after an English village. We were not fair to cities; we did not set ourselves to ferret out their fascinating corners. For one thing there was of course the traffic problem, and only some one who has tried driving in English city traffic knows what that can mean. Streets which are narrow relics of the days of citizens on foot or horseback (not very old records of Rochester for instance boast of their stone bridge "fourteen feet wide") may possess a tram line down the middle. Trucks and steam-driven lorries abound. Char-a-bancs suddenly heave around corners. There is ordinary motor car traffic aplenty. Eighty-two people are riding bicycles; pedestrians for the most part seem to cross a street as fancy suggests, wheeling baby buggies, "prams," whether they have babies in them or vegetables or pots and pans, or nothing. They like wheeling prams. Cars park comfortably and indiscriminately on either side of the street, headed in either or any direction; and with that admirable independence and indifference which has made the English nation great, nobody on foot or on a bicycle pays any attention to automobile honkings. If June would exclaim "There's a timbered house!" my eyes were too glued on the char-a-bancs in front of me to care. Even so if I caught sight of some fascinating corner and called "Look quick right!" I'd hear June's admonition "Heavens, you almost ran over that man!"

We could of course have parked the car and gone sight-seeing on foot. Sometimes we did. But one turns so many 1890 corners to find one 1690 reward. The honest truth is the minute we nosed our little Austin into the confines of a city our one longing was to get through that city and out the other side into the country again. We rarely slept or ate in a town or city all summer long if we could help it. Let this acknowledge itself to be a somewhat one-sided account of the British Isles.

So then, here was Rochester (31,261 inhabitants) and we fresh from Penshurst (a dozen houses) and Chiddingstone (six). If only the Norman keep could have been in Chidding-

stone, we needn't have gone to Rochester at all. No one asked us where we should like it put.

Rochester lies on Watling Street; indeed its High Street is part of Watling Street. I can't tell now just when the idea of ancient roads first took hold of us with such fascination. I don't believe it was as early as Rochester, though as we drove along what was and is Watling Street we no doubt remarked "Imagine, we're on a Roman Road!" The very names became a dim music from far back ages in our ears: Watling Street, Stane Street, Fosse Way, Ermine Street, Ichneild Way. . . . The magic is lost entirely on the newcomer. "Street"—what could hold less romance? You see a city street. But the only British highways called streets are Roman, and if one runs from Canterbury off and on to Glasgow, or from Exeter to Lincoln, in other words practically from one end of England to the other, it is no city street. What adds to the fascination is to realize that stretches of these streets antedate the days of Rome perhaps by thousands of years. The feet of neolithic man trod them hard along the watersheds before a horse or chariot wheel was thought of. There is no name in England that conjures up more romance of the past for me than the Peddar's Way. Of that anon.

Without visioning what sort of a prehistoric settlement may have existed at Rochester, there was surely a Roman town there, with its walls and fort. Of the walls there are still traces; the Norman keep stands where probably Romans guarded their bridge or ferry crossing. It was a Saxon stronghold when Rome was forgotten as though she had never been. St. Augustine crossed the Channel on his mission to convert the heathen. This good pious man had his trials aplenty, and after all his labors could feel but two localities were settled enough in their Christianity to justify the appointment of a bishop. Since about 600 Rochester possessed its Christian church and a bishop ordained by Augustine himself. Probably William the Conqueror built the first Norman keep at Rochester and its two successors figured for centuries in wars and rebellions. It was from Roch-

ester James II "rose at dead of night . . . stole out at a back door, and went through the garden to the shore of the Medway . . ." and thus to France, and England never saw him more. Speaking of history it was at the Bull Hotel in High Street where the Pickwick Club lodged at the beginning of its travels. Falstaff and Pickwick are my favorite characters for these regions. I am sorry not to feel properly grateful to St. Augustine. You cannot help but have the feeling that if he had not converted the heathen some one else would have, but had Falstaff and Pickwick failed of creation, the world would never have found substitutes.

If the cathedral at Rochester can be described as "externally insignificant, much of the outside late and poor; central tower mean; general effect low and sprawling; eastern parts clumsy," we can be pardoned for not having lingered longer. Besides, the door was locked, and, besides, we had Canterbury for the next day.

And besides it was getting on and we had in mind to discover a second Penshurst for our second night. We hunted hard enough! We got off the main road, Roman or no (their drawback, a tragic one in our eyes, is that they are almost always so lamentably straight. A straight road has no business to be in England!) and wandered around at the suggestion of every casual sign post. It was a region without a bed for travelers. We crossed onto the other side of Watling Street, consulted maps, agreed to try the sea coast. Ah yes, a quaint, small, salt-water inn on the sea coast! By now it was almost ten. We made for Whitstable. The woe of Whitstable, "famous for its oysters"! What has an oyster to do with a bed for me and mine? We put up at—shall I bend to my academic training and insert the word "perhaps"?—the most terrible hotel in England. We could not bring ourselves to bear with our fate long enough to eat breakfast there, and so bore on early to Canterbury and broke fast in the shadow of Christ Church gateway, in the Butter Market on Mercery Lane.

Canterbury is a city one should settle in for a spell and

let its importance for the history of England penetrate fully. You cannot dash in after a ruinous night in a locality famous for oysters and hard squeaky lumpy beds and decayed plush and whisky advertisements and musty smells and street noise without ceasing and dash out again the same day, and feel you have done anything but slightly insult Canterbury. Who am I to write of Canterbury?

I had longed years on end to see the cathedral, and stood within it uttering my thrilled gratitude to God and man that I at last was there. Two cathedrals have exerted such a powerful influence over me that I never expect to feel any place before any architecture on earth such depths of emotion as Seville and Chartres caused to surge within me. No smaller church has ever overcome me like that of the lower church of St. Francis of Assisi. Two details worried me all summer about English cathedrals and checked the fullest depth of appreciation—the unspeakable modern stained glass, which over and over hurt, it was so hideous, and the breaking of the long satisfying stretch from west to east by the choir screen. I know it should be there, and why. Oh, I have read all about those screens, yet no explanation can console me for that obstructed view. Too often to be borne, the organ is perched on top of the screen. Who am I to mention cathedrals? A publisher once asked me if I would write a book on French cathedrals. I looked at him paralyzed. “I don’t know the first thing in the world about cathedrals!” “That’s just why I want you to write the book.” He meant of course that he feared the technical wisdom of authorities. My ignorance is so colossal I could not write the first sentence.

But completely ignorant as I am of architecture, I can stand in the nave of a great cathedral and feel its significance from my head to my feet. It is always more than architecture; all that it has meant in the life of centuries surges over the mind . . . and one is all but submerged with the implications of Canterbury. What a procession of the years: first Rome . . . then complete annihilation at the hands of the Jutes after Rome,

and then darkness.... With a new dawn, Saxons and their name for Canterbury—the Fort of the Men of Kent. Ethelbert, King of a pagan Kent, stands out as the first personality; Canterbury his capitol, his wife the Christian Bertha, daughter of a king of the Franks. “My Lord your Highness, I may be allowed to take my Bishop to your land?” “Certainly, my lady.” One Bishop! . . . The little church of St. Martin outside the walls, one hallowed spot where a queen may worship. What prayers must have reached heaven to turn the heart of her king toward the light! . . . St. Augustine. King of Kent, here is a man you catch yourself listening to! Perhaps the ancient chronicler did not exactly quote the King: “Your words are fair, and your promises, but because they are new and doubtful, I cannot give my assent to them and leave the customs I have so long observed with the whole Anglo-Saxon race. But because you have come hither as strangers from a long distance . . . we are anxious to receive you hospitably. . . .”

Augustine in Canterbury, lodged near the King, preaching in the small church of the Queen. . . . The King thinks the matter over three months, and is baptised. Augustine founds the first cathedral. . . .

Christian Canterbury is despoiled by the Danes—“England must reckon to be pester’d with the worst sort of people that *Denmark* did afford. Gleams of prosperity hatch and invite the worst vermin to come abroad.” Inhabitants slaughtered, cathedral burned, its holy Archbishop chained and dragged about for seven months by Danish soldiers, martyred at last with stones in a drunken brawl. . . . William the Conqueror welcomed—at least not resisted—and a Norman archbishop, Lanfranc himself, builds anew on the burned ruins. . . . 1170, Thomas à Becket. Thomas à Becket, what fame you came by, what worship, what sacrifices made in your name, what pilgrims you brought to Canterbury, century after century after century! How much of it were you really worth? It is not hard to make you out worth precious little of it, but no man, if he had to be murdered, could have chosen more dramatic circum-

stances and a more dramatic place. To murder an archbishop and to murder him in his own newly built cathedral! What a penance from an innocent king, and Henry II one of the star kings of England! Barefoot he goes to the cathedral, clad only in a rough shirt, a royal kiss upon the pavement where Becket's head had been severed from his body, then keeling at the martyr's tomb—first five blows from the Bishop of London, then five from every bishop and abbot present (how many present? and was there one perhaps to shrink behind some column when his turn drew near, holding no enthusiasm for whipping a man, be he king or commoner?). Not done yet with the blows! Every monk present gives three. A Christlike afternoon for a cathedral, and a comfortable afternoon for a king. . . . Two years later part of the cathedral in flames. "Thus the house of God, hitherto delightful like a paradise of pleasure" (but not perhaps for King Henry II) "then lay contemptible in the ashes of the fire. The people, astonished, and in a manner frantic for grief, tore their hair, and uttered some enormous reproaches against the Lord and his saints. There were lay men as well as monks, who would rather have died than have seen the church of God so miserably perish. . . . To relieve their miseries they fixed the altar, such as it was, in the nave of the church, where they howled, rather than sung, matins and vespers. . . ."

When the pilgrimages start the life of all Canterbury revolves about the shrine of Thomas à Becket. In 1357 the Black Prince, the King of France, his prisoner, both make their offerings. One hundred thousand pilgrims assemble at the Becket Jubilee in 1420. Again in 1520 two kings kneel together at the shrine and one of them is the devout, more or less devout, Henry VIII. Eighteen years later he has twenty-six cartloads of treasure hauled off from the now suppressed shrine and the despoiled cathedral. The great days of Canterbury are over.

The red line on the R.A.C. map led from Canterbury to Sandwich; obediently we followed. I could have stayed for days in Canterbury, but the sight of Sandwich completely reconciled

me for having moved on. Which is one of the ruinous phases of travel, based on unnumbered experiences and not on mere wishful thinking—that everlasting suspicion, if not certainty, that just around the next corner lies something as, if not even more, wonderful. Is it stilled only where one lies buried in the grave?

Would we have had enough sense, left to our own devices, to see Sandwich? Perhaps, since it lies just along the coast from the ruins of Richborough “castle,” the most important of the Roman forts erected against the Saxons back in the fourth century, with once a walled Roman town beside it. We were to keep an eye out for Roman ruins all summer. But I cannot remember knowing there was a town called Sandwich in all England before we began watching for the name on sign posts. Sandwich Islands, eat a sandwich—anything more to be known about the word? Yes, Sandwich.—They all three have something to do with each other. It was in honor of the fourth Earl of Sandwich that Captain Cook named the new Hawaiian Islands, and it was the same nobleman who could rarely spare the time from the gambling tables to eat a meal, and so had brought to him a slice of meat between two slices of bread.

Caesar landed near Sandwich as did St. Augustine. When Canute anchored his galleys before Sandwich in 1016 to do his bit toward the future Empire, it was England’s most famed port. It was for four centuries, almost until the days of Elizabeth, one of the most, if not the most, influential of the Cinque Ports—Sandwich, Dover, Hastings, Hythe and New Romney (later Winchelsea and Rye), those once influential coast towns whose business it was to supply the English King with a Royal Navy. It was at Sandwich Thomas à Becket landed on his return to England to put a king where he belonged, and lose his own head for it, which was of such historical and religious advantage to his name, and incidentally to his cause. Richard the Lion Hearted landed in Sandwich after his escape from Austria; Edward III, head hanging, after he had lost Calais. A fifteenth century Bohemian chronicler describes the port:

"Here I first beheld fleets of vessels, ships, galleons and cogs; that is, ships driven by the wind alone. The galleons were propelled by oars alone and carried 200 men. I admired the sailors climbing the masts and foretelling the approach of the wind and what sails to be hoisted and what lowered. There is a custom at Sandwich that men walk about all night blowing trumpets and other musical (sic) instruments, calling out and announcing what wind is blowing at that hour. On hearing this, if a wind is reported to be blowing convenient for them, they sally forth. . . ." Henry VIII pays Sandwich a visit; Elizabeth stays there three days. Then God disposes. The harbor silts up—the harbor that boasted ninety-five ships, fifteen hundred sailors, and now lies two miles from the sea. As if to make some amends for such a cruel twist of fate, religious persecution sent industrious Flemish and French weavers and market gardeners from the Low Countries to the ruined port, "gentle and profitable strangers," who brought prosperity of a new sort to the town. . . . Sandwich sends two of her ships filled with natives of the region to the New World a few years after the founding of New England, names and particulars of each family preserved. None other than Samuel Pepys was once elected, though did not serve, M.P. for Sandwich, and supported the canopy at the coronation of James II as an ex-officio Cinque Ports baron. History is rather silent after Elizabeth, until Sandwich once more achieves fame and glory as possessor of one of the finest golf courses in England. Good, let them have anything, do anything, as long as they never straighten or widen a single one of the ancient streets or alter a shingle on an ancient house,—as if they hadn't done a sinful amount of the latter already. But much is left!

One detailed memory of Sandwich stands out with such vividness that the rest of the fascinating, crooked, unique old town tends to become merely background. For many the magnet of any spot worth journeying to is preëminently a church. I have been broken-hearted over too many churches—the hands of the accursed "restorer" have been too busy. I approach the

interior of any religious edifice sunk in misgivings, so sunk that many times I fail to approach. Nor alas has the hand of the bumptious restorer been confined to churches. One gets so that misgivings assail the soul no matter what one approaches—why couldn't kings have beheaded ninety-eight per cent of the whole barbarous restorer brood? There is one building they have left well nigh alone in Sandwich, of the type which held the greatest fascination for us all summer long.

Anyone who travels must get down on his knees every night and thank the guider of his destinies that at least one thing he might so easily have passed by that day was seen. Thus it was with us and the Old House at Sandwich. We came so near not going in at all!

The Old House faces what was once the harbor and what is now hardly more than a ditch and a flat expanse of marsh grass reaching two miles to the sea. It is the most satisfying and livable and unrestored and lovely of all the Tudor smaller houses we were to see in England. To step into the hall gives one a gasp of delight—mellow panelling, old furniture, old portraits, and the great fireplace, not to mention the bed room on the panelled floor above where Queen Elizabeth once slept. It seems to me I would be doing one of the kind acts of this planet to let it be known that mere mortals like you and me can stay the night and have breakfast, lunch, tea (in the garden) and dinner in that rare abode for 18s/6d per day—less than five dollars—or if one wanted a week of bewitched leisure in one of England's quaint towns, and fairly near, if such is fancied, a world-renowned golf course, it would come to a bit over twenty-five dollars a week (the card indeed says special reductions for "golfers,"—Why, I should like to know, for golfers? Why not for authors? They need it more!). The portly very high class servant is alone worth the price of admission. Ah, I would that all I love could see the Old House at Sandwich. How it did thrill a thirteen year old girl! The pain of it, that we had to move on—and yet, as June's diary puts it: "We left Sandwich in a fit of contentment."

Down the coast through Deal and down the hill—and what a hill!—to Dover Castle. To have left the Old House, where one could so gratefully step right in today and live in low-ceilinged, panelled rooms of happiest proportions, for the Norman keep of Dover Castle. . . . The comfort attained in life during three hundred years! One must—and there are days and moments and moods when that “must” means an “ought” and an “all right, all right then, I shall”—one must see landmarks of history. One queen and possibly one king, her father, visited the Old House. Just about every king of England has stayed in Dover Castle. I agree with the author who claimed Dover Castle was “an intimidating subject to the literary Rambler who must if he can help it be neither guide-booky, frivolous, nor a bore.” It is so rambling and enormous and built into and built onto and pre-Roman and Roman and Norman and ever since, that you can feel with William Cobbett “Here are line upon line, trench upon trench, cavern upon cavern, bomb-proof upon bomb-proof; in short the very sight of the thing convinces you that either madness the most humiliating or profligacy the most scandalous must have been at work here for years. It is a parcel of holes made in a hill, to hide Englishmen from Frenchmen. Just as if the Frenchmen would come to this hill! What the devil should they come to this hill for?” Well, let it be, in less agitated hands “perhaps at once the largest, most complete, and most complex example of mediæval fortifications.” There are days when you should not drive direct from the Old House in Sandwich to Dover Castle. There are days when, if you have seen the Old House in Sandwich, the only place you would repair to afterwards is a real estate office and buy it. Or at least go back and spend the night there.

Through Folkestone to Hythe, where we felt it was time to play tennis and take stock of life and swim. We played much tennis, June became possessed to get the English kings in order and I read travel books unabashed; we swam once; and we looked at not one sight. Though we did, because unable to keep out of the car, drive along Romney Marsh to Romney

and New Romney. There was a time when Romney Marsh seemed so apart from an every day world that a light-hearted soul could claim: "The world according to the best geography is divided into Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Romney Marsh." To us it came to people Sheila Kaye-Smith's *Joanna Godden*. The important days of Romney belong to a very far distant past—"Rumeney hath been a metely good haven, in so much that within remembrance of men, ships have come hard up to the town, and cast anchor in one of the church-yards. The sea is now two miles from the town, which is so sorely thereby decayed." New Romney then figured as a busy blustering Cinque Port harbor—until the sea left it over a mile inland.

Yet the noble river Rother flows near at hand. One fine day there is a "hydeous tempest" followed by a fearful inundation of the Marsh, and when the waters recede, the river Rother is flowing to the sea over by Rye in Sussex. Thus through no wickedness of weak mortals, nor stupidity, but "by an act of God" can destinies of man and place be altered.

Yet man is not passive. If acts of God can leave us humbled, we can take spades in hand and reclaim a marsh. Romney Marsh was once under water. Now it pastures some of the finest sheep in England. Ask *Joanna Godden*. Romney Marsh would overflow at every tide were it not for the Dymchurch wall, along which we drove to the quaint corners still remaining in New Romney, to drink tea and dwell upon the fact that even though the waters of the earth recede and the power and pomp of ships and men fade dim, there is still left this and that to make life worth living.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT A SUNDAY AND MONDAY CAN BRING IF SPENT IN KENT AND SUSSEX, INCLUDING, BESIDES SCENERY, AN ABBEY, ROMAN VILLA, ELIZABETHAN MANOR HOUSE, OLD INN, CATHEDRAL, NUMEROUS CASTLES. AND A MODERN COEDUCATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL



WE HAD planned to stay in Hythe all Sunday, to avoid what my mind pictured as rather lurid "Sunday traffic." The expression has come almost to connote roadways strewn with wreckage and dead to the average at-all-timorous American. Let me hereby announce that except for the approaches to London, during our 5252 miles we found Sunday invariably the pleasantest day of all to drive—practically no trucks and business traffic, fewer busses and char-a-bancs on the whole, town and city streets absolutely deserted, and, as far as we ever could make out, no more private cars than on any week day.

What a first Sunday was ours! And we had thought to twirl our thumbs in Hythe waiting for the authorities to clear up Sunday's wrecks! As soon as ever we could—and this held true for three months—we got off the main roads, and the miles brought one stretch of lovely Kentish and later Sussex country after another, one fascinating old village after another. How can one drive on through and by? "We were beside ourselves with joy all day."



THE OLD HOUSE, SANDWICH

Smallhythe stands out—the wee-est of villages far off the beaten tracks, eight miles inland. And then to learn that it was once the port for Tenterden! Oh, the fickle sea! A single road, a small red brick church, a few charming old black and white half-timbered houses sprawling along the gentle hill, the one next the old toll house once the home of Ellen Terry, genius as well, evidently, in knowing where to live. . . . Smallhythe is one of those rare, favored localities in England which has the right of electing its own vicar, instead of having some one thrust upon them by the lord or squire of the manor or higher church authorities, and who then remains until he dies, no matter how “unsympatich” and incapable he may be. If the abuses of his office are too flagrant, if he spends most of his time and activities in places which have nothing to do with his church, he may with much red tape be removed. Again see *Joanna Godden*.

Rye, climbing its crooked, cobbled, hilly lanes to its handsome church, is like nothing else in England. All of Rye rises sheer out of Romney Marsh. Henry James too was a genius in knowing where to live. We parked the car on the low lands and explored up and down and roundabout. Many an artist has all but worn out his easel and his canvases and his brushes in Rye, “most painted town in England”—no wonder! Rye was one of those exceptions to the rule of village near manor house. It prospered on its own, a bit of a town with no great houses, no evidence of wealth anywhere, but on every hilly grass-grown cobbled way ancient small house after small house you consider renting for next summer; not that anyone seems to contemplate moving out to let you in. Or, of course, you may decide the sixteenth century Mermaid Inn must be your stopping place. And Rye once a Cinque Port! Where is the sea? Odd, the parallel between Sandwich and Rye. Harbour vanished, is the town to crumble and die? To Sandwich the Flemish weavers and market gardeners, seeking peace for their souls along with life in their bodies. It was the Massacre of St. Bar-

tholomew which brought to Rye the fleeing Huguenots and their skill and prosperity.

And yet one more parallel—golfers know why the sea took itself some two miles from the port of Rye. It was the hand of God in whose Wisdom land evolved out of water in the first place a million million years, or when, ago, merely to begin preparing itself for golf courses. No more do crowned heads embark from Rye on missions of diplomacy or conquest, but father and mother take their clubs in hand and stride from hole to hole behind the sand dunes where once proud galleys rode, and nurse herds the children onto the little ten minutes steam tram to the miles of firm sand beach which means as much to the young as ever did harbour to a sailor from the sea. Rye is still blessed and blesses.

On to New Winchelsea, past Camber Castle, ruined coast fortress, relic of Henry VIII's anxieties over French assault, the marshy landscape dotted here and there with Martello towers, raised at a later day against the time Napoleon should see fit to annex the British Isles. Rye on one hill rising out of the marsh, Winchelsea across a short stretch of marsh country on its hill—New Winchelsea. Old Winchelsea belonged to the era when the sea remained where men thought it belonged and built accordingly, Old Winchelsea on its island, with a proud landward harbour, itself at the moment the most important of the Cinque Ports. Ah the sea! It simply and in its own fathomless way submerged Winchelsea—churches, homes, mills . . . inhabitants. That was in the years 1250 and 1252. "The tide flowed twice without ebbing, and to many was heard for miles inland." (Men have seen the tip of a tower in the sands covering what was once the town of Kenfig.) God disposes . . . and man, this time a king, and he Edward I, proposes to build a New Winchelsea. If Rye is a town unique in all England, across the marsh on its safe (what is safe?) hill lies Winchelsea, perhaps like nothing else in these Isles, since ruined Roman times, until one comes up to the modern garden cities. For New Winchelsea was the first, and until yesterday the only,

example of "city planning," and shall one say therefore is the most American town in England in that it was laid out in squares? In 1288, after five years of building, the gates of the new, walled, Cinque Ports town were opened with grand festivities to receive its new inhabitants, and history began a fresh, dry page. Mighty for its day and age were New Winchelsea and the great house of Alard, with ships and men of valour. Often it housed kings. But the fresh dry page of history remained fresh and dry but a short period, for the tale of Winchelsea is that of one bloody pillage after another at the hands of the French across the Channel. By the middle of the fifteenth century she could bear up under no more. In 1448 Rye was burned; then Winchelsea was captured and ravaged; the sea was already gone—first too much of it, then not enough. (What an unfathomable monstrous thing is this sea!) The merchants pack up their sorely diminished belongings—what sense is there in holding on? Comes the heavy greedy clutch of Henry VIII on the monastic houses, and monks and nuns trail away empty-handed through the three great gates and over the marsh. . . . And there on its Sunday hill perched a sleepy bit of a somewhat nondescript village which is Winchelsea today.

It is bad for traffic when an old town has an old gateway over the main road, and that main road steep. A driver may get enthusiastic over the old gate and forget all about shifting gears and stall. Who does love starting on a steep hill with a honking line of cars on one's tail, be it Sunday or Tuesday or St. Swithin's Day? . . . So this all but deserted village was the proud town of more than 4,000, laid out by a king. What a philosopher travel makes of a man! There is the church "square" to prowl, in its center all that is left of what either once was, or once was planned to be, a great church to Thomas à Becket. The valiant chestnut tree at the corner of the choir, which now is the church, makes amends for the lack of a stone nave. Outside the church grass, trees, ivy, streets where man would seem seldom to tread; within, those tombs of Winchel-

sea's armored great whose dangerously lived and eventful lives may appear to have gone to build a Birmingham and a Manchester rather than preserve the inviolability of a king's walled town.

A few places in England where we had thought to feel the past in generous measure let us down with a thud. Hastings was one of these. What if here began the Norman march which was to build an England no Saxon had ever visioned? By the time one might locate a single ruined Norman stone, streets of modern ugliness closed in to cast one at last suffering and unrewarded alongside a crowded beach of hurdy-gurdies, ice cream cones and public houses. Get out of our way! We are speeding as fast as traffic allows to leave Hastings forever behind us. William the Conqueror indeed! Give me rather the sight of one yard of Bayeux tapestry for the feel of his day than the whole town of Hastings. Nor was there an appealing spot to be located where starving Parkers might find tea.

To have such a road as the road to Battle finally lead out of such a town as Hastings! Empty, we still could exult. And then in Battle, Elizabeth Ann's, the spot for tea we had known a Sabbath would bring us, could we but hold out with enough patience for Providence to work its ways. . . . Inwardly content, such corners—yea, and such miles—of Sussex fascination and loveliness as still lay ahead before we called it a day. For we drove on over devious, still, untraveled marshland roads, lovely beyond telling, first to Pevensey, the accepted landing place of William the Conqueror in 1066. Pevensey was worth a visit. Small indeed the present village with quaint houses, two churches, a still occupied Mint House six hundred years old, and the remains of a castle which goes back to Roman times, with much of the Roman wall about its ten acre enclosure still standing. Here it is possible to get on familiar terms with history without wrenching one's imagination out of shape. The only agony in Pevensey was to discover the kodak had been left behind in the tea shop. Many a Hastings could we have passed through without ever noticing the loss!

EAST GRINSTEAD AND THE AUSTIN



BODIAM CASTLE

As if the late afternoon drive along the flat lands and Pevensey at the end were not reward enough, on our way back to Battle and the kodak, we found Hurstmonceaux. It was no accidental discovery. If I can read such words in a guide book as "extraordinarily interesting and picturesque fortified mansion of 1440," though no guide posts come to our rescue, though trudging, knowing country-folk are few and far between, nothing but black night could still our frantic search. What rewards, what rewards! Seven of a still Sabbath afternoon, low greenwooded hills and fields sloping gently to form a saucer which held a red brick castle looking out over green rolling pastures across its moat. It was one of the most utterly satisfying castles my eyes had ever beheld in any land, with the finest gate and towers over the portcullis of any castle in England. Alas, on that day and at that hour there was no chance to be admitted, but one could stalk the nearby land and gaze after a fashion which might have brought three arrows to the heart four hundred years ago. In what mediæval glory we pranced our armored steeds away from Hurstmonceaux!—and back to Battle, to a closed tea shop but an open Chequers Inn, where we spent the night in faith that a kodak, and assurance that an abbey, would be ours for a morning's asking.

Well now, that Monday. . . . Suppose you took nine days to land in London and bought a car and had just that Monday. A thousand times yes—do it all for just that Monday!

First, Battle Abbey.

"This place of war is Battle called, and in battle here,
Quite conquered and overthrown the English natives
were . . ."

William the Conqueror, being he to do the overthrowing, orders an abbey built on the spot where victory furlled his banners, and he dined and slept the night away among the slaughtered. From Pevensey to Hastings to Battle. . . . The boys and I sped him off years ago from the coast of Normandy, and here were June and I fighting the Battle of Hastings with

him. Or weren't we feeling just a bit as if Harold needed us more, what with having left part of his army dead up north at Stamford Bridge where he had defeated the Danes but three days before, and most of his other reinforcements failing him? At any rate, there in the ruins of Battle Abbey we hacked away with both sides, and then located the place where Harold died with an arrow through his eye, the last of his housecarls weltering in their blood all about him. An old gardener led us to the very spot. (Well, could you prove it wasn't the very spot?) (Then, back in London, you can go to Mme. Tussaud's and see him dying before your very eyes, arrow and all.)

Battle Abbey, the restored part, is now a girls' school. "Imagine," June gasped, "being allowed to go to school in a place that looks like this!" I shall forget date and outcome of all battles ever fought before the memory of the rose bushes and the trees of Battle Abbey grows dim. To wander under those trees, so gorgeously shaped, leaves so variously green and shaded, bark red, grey, dark green, almost black . . . and your choice of discovering another ruin or another rose, or both . . . and never a soul stirring that early morning but an old gardener. How does anyone who travels any place keep from writing books about it, if for nothing else but the chance it gives to re-live every glorious moment? Where and how would this world allow me the opportunity to wander again those Battle Abbey lawns and ruins and remember with almost a pain the beauty of those trees and roses? Yet here I sit, and it is all freshly mine again. And when I come to read these pages over to tear my hair at the inadequacies of an insensate pen in a merely human hand, even so I shall re-live each stretch of road, each castle, each ruin, each village. And when it is typed I correct the typing, and then it is mine again. It is mine in later anguish when the inhumanities of galleys darken life's waking hours, and mine on a last less troubled journey with the page proofs. . . . Some day, a long, long time afterwards, I may take a dusty book off a shelf and begin to read

that summer of 1930 again. . . . But there is a bit of suffering to do with that. "Lor, what writing. . . ."

According to June's diary, "we dawdled our way through the rose gardens back to the hotel and car. . . ." Battle Abbey—in a less generous world that would be sight enough for a mortal day. But no, hardly are we out of Battle and headed we know where, when we find it. . . . Bodiam Castle! If I had to pick but one English castle and could behold no more, without a moment's hesitation I should choose Bodiam. Square and towered and grey and moated, its waters now a mass of water lilies, it stands proud and very quiet, low among its oaks and rolling hills. It was begun by a hero of Crecy and Poitiers back in 1386, but actually took thirty years to finish, and no wonder, considering oxen had to drag the grey stone miles over the ruts and bogs and mud which in those days meant a road. The outer face the world sees is of a kindly yesterday; across the moat and inside all is ruins. "It delighted my poor cramped soul especially," wrote the "cramped" June, "because I could climb all around freely without feeling the strings of conventionality as Professor——," and neither she nor I could remember the professor's name, "would have it." (No member of her family pulls any strings of conventionality around her!) "The ruins were simply lovely from every possible part, especially from the towers, which looked pretty unstable, but seemed to stand my weight." You are supposed to pronounce Bodiam, *Bodgem*, but nothing seems to happen if you don't.

From Bodiam we took unchartered, devious, delightful roads back up into Kent again, the country lovelier than any yet. That day it could not have been later than two o'clock when we passed a spot where no one, hungry or no, but must stop and eat—call it late lunch, call it early tea. We sat in the garden of Lindridge Farm near Lamberhurst, surrounded by a riot of flowers of every height, color, scent, and looked down over such a stretch of English country as to make one pray never to forget. And under our noses strawberries picked within the half hour! Had it been possible to leave those flowers

and that view to go inside, we could have eaten in an ancient low-ceilinged, beamed house with great fireplaces and polished brasses.

Through Goudhurst, one of the loveliest of Kentish towns, on to Tunbridge Wells, which raised pictures of crinolines (June wrote "petticoats and *whoop* skirts," which dates petticoats in a way my years cannot allow) and literary lights of yesterday along its famed columned walk, the Pantiles. Over roads of trees and views and windings and we quite lost (lost in England—as if one could be lost in England!), to East Grinstead where we were loath to pass on, because of certain old houses and corners. Yet we could not stop yet, not on such an afternoon, not when every mile of country ahead keeps turning out as lovely as, if not lovelier than, the mile we had just passed along. . . . On . . . on . . . on . . . Halt! Here we have got to call the day done. This isn't true! There can't be a spot like this, and an inn like that, and such a house to look at across the way! No, this we can't pass by. And so we tuck ourselves away in a beamed and gabled room in the wee Chequers Inn on the hill before Pulborough. This *is* England! Now we know we're here. And if I had to choose the one quaintest, most unbelievably crooked, small, half-timbered and gabled age-old house in all England, it would be the one our windows looked out upon in Pulborough. To June it was "the daintiest, most fairy-tale house in God's creation. It was stuck way up on a bank with the road immediately beneath it and out of the wee leaded windows came the brightest colors. The trees were tall around it and between the branches you could glimpse little trails of smoke, and the bright red geraniums in the still wee-er garden in front. I expected any minute to see a little elf with a big green cap come dancing out of the door blowing a pipe maybe." Up the hill from the other side of our windows stood the village church, entered through its ancient lych-gate.

I cannot help it, Tuesday followed Monday, and Tuesday was a day which did nothing but heap riches on top of Mon-

day's and Sunday's store. It was sacrilege to be riding in a car; we should have walked every inch of the morning's trip, at least, if not the whole day. To spend one entire summer of one's life roaming on foot through Sussex! . . . From Pulborough we streaked off onto roads of little traffic and more loveliness than any roads to date to Petworth. "In the valley of the River Rother no hurried men ever come," writes Belloc, "for it leads nowhere . . . the Rother of quiet men, the valley that is like a shrine in England." One stretch was so glorious we had to turn around and drive it all over again. Besides, miles back we had passed a dot of a nameless village where each beamed house in its gay garden needed on second thought much more attention than we had given it.

Our objective was really Bignor, and I would that all I love could see Bignor, though I personally suffered considerably over a thatch-roofed, timbered and plastered and riotously gardened house for sale, which left me unrestful many miles after. Since it was much too large to buy and write books in, I wondered if I could start an inn and if anyone would come to stay. I would serve delicious coffee which would be lost on England and toast for breakfast which would be made that morning instead of the night before, but that too would bring in no English trade. What Americans would ever come to Bignor? Anyway there would be no competition. . . . The handful of age-old houses which is Bignor sprawls about its valley at all angles, its roads twisting before they have begun. No one able to give you directions in the least intelligible as to where you can find the ruins of the Roman villa, which is why you drove to Bignor, and not to be tormented over a thatched and timbered house. I became very predisposed toward a Roman or a Briton who would have sense enough to build a villa near Bignor.

We explored the remains of two of England's countless Roman villas in the course of the summer. There are two thrills to be gotten out of the sight, one being the historical. You go back hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of years, and

here was a civilization—a Roman villa—and the life and comfort and culture of it something on the whole far beyond what Bignor, say, knows today. The other concerns itself with the age-old thrill of discovery. Consider the hundreds upon hundreds of years all evidence of that Roman villa lay foot deep and more beneath the surface of England, with no being to guess its presence. And then one day a prosaic plough does its prosaic work—and the “Ganymede” pavement is revealed, the date July 18th, the year 1811. For eight years the patient, eager antiquary digs, and at last secret after secret buried there for centuries is laid bare and measured and charted, and the spacious villa of a luxury-loving Romanized Briton of the first to the fourth centuries is conjured up from a ploughed field. Today a great part of the excavations lie again under the ploughed ground, the better to preserve them, but small thatched huts dot the field, and each protects the remains of a fine mosaic pavement, the floor of a Roman room. When you gaze upon the bathing and heating arrangements there is no help for the small sigh which rises skyward. How many centuries is it taking England to catch up to the villa at Bignor in the matter of personal comfort? Or doesn't it matter? They had open fireplaces besides steam heat. And Leeds and Liverpool with the chilblains these decades on end. We felt almost on speaking terms with the owner of one of the largest Roman villas in Briton as we walked the fields back to the car. Directly across on Bignor Hill is the road that was once the Roman Stane Street, and still is a road of sorts, for that matter, leading from Chichester to London. Along that road traveled the dwellers in our villa, their supplies, their guests—and the Saxons who put an end forever to Roman-British villa life.

The road from Bignor to Bury was in part over downs, in part through such a stretch of forest it made you hold your breath. One must walk in Sussex since there is no other honorable way to see it. Then came Arundel, clustered at the foot of the great grey castle of the Duke of Norfolk. We yearned to see the other side of those massive stone walls, but it was

not the day for the public. We bore on to Chichester and its cathedral just beyond the intersection of the two Roman roads of this once Roman city, where the owner of our villa no doubt spent the better part of his years.

If Chichester Cathedral is vague to my summer memory, yet ask me what the place looked like where we had tea in Midhurst. Why can I see so plainly a line of smoked hams hanging by a great open fireplace with its rows of polished coppers in the sixteenth century Spread Eagle Inn at Midhurst and not an arch of Chichester Cathedral? Answer me too why up and down England no matter how well the mellow, beamed atmosphere of an ancient inn has been preserved, almost invariably they have bits of—usually pink—silk, fringed with little glass beads for electric light shades. Why scratch right down the heart so needlessly? Gladly, gratefully would I eat cold flabby toast all my life and drink hot thin mud for breakfast if thereby something would happen to English electric light shades. Of course, so many inns are wrecked so by so many atrocities that one scarcely lifts pained eyes as far as shades.

Why not cover the subject of old inns right here? They have heavy starched lace curtains in the windows, draped back to expose between each pair a jardiniere so ghastly in color and pattern that the soul contracts. The inevitable fitful sluts of palms finish the view from without. Inside, maybe the old beams are still to be seen, maybe they've been plastered over and cerise-flowered wallpaper welcomes the stranger. The handsomest bit for the eyes to rest upon is a round much patterned brass platter or some plates, any plates, hanging from the wall; as to the pictures, they are usually enlarged family chromos, relatives of the innkeeper and his wife, including as a rule a generous sized chromo of the innkeeper and another of his wife executed about ten years after they were married. The innkeeper then wore brave, draped mustachios, the wife a high collar and a pompadour. The frames are all massive. There are also usually alarming colored pictures of fanciful pompadoured ladies smiling all the way from coyly to energetically

under. very large hats. Paper flowers abound, spreading from under the nose out and up. Calendars, whisky mainly, some ale and bitters. Two shelves. A stuffed fish caught fifteen miles away in 1881. If the wallpaper is cerise the silk fringed electric light shades will be orange. The carpet under any condition is red and blue. If there is a piano, the more room for shells and smaller family photographs. And as you drive down the crooked village street you spy a gabled inn that makes your heart rejoice. There, there, is where we will have tea! June sees ahead first and moans, "Jardiniere and palms." We vision the whole interior without doing more than get back from second into third, and we're off, hungry, but no one will get us in behind those jardinieres and palms, if we can help it! There is always a ray of hope when colored curtains have replaced starched lace. England, Wales and Scotland run to a plain warm orange or blue just now, which over and over beguiled us into parking the car and knowing that here, in this inn, all was well. How often, once inside, did we have to glue our eyes upon the curtains and let it go at that!

And then dwell gratefully, peacefully on the exceptions up and down the land. Not alas that I can remember a single inn which kept true in every detail. Often when a little would have been in extremely good taste, quantities were piled in. Perhaps the dining room of the Feathers Inn in Ludlow came nearest to being exactly right, and glimpses of the Mermaid Inn in Sandwich, the Hop Pole at Ollerton, the God Begot in Winchester, the Highway in Burford, an inn with one perfect room, the Victoria in Llanbedr, and the Gorphwysfa at the head of Llanberis Pass, both in Wales, the Pheasant Inn at Bassen-thaite on the edge of the Lake District, the Crown Hotel, Oakham, the Lindbridge Farm near Lamberhurst, the Spread Eagle at Midhurst. . . . Come to think of it, that little Castle Inn our second afternoon in Chiddingstone was about as well done a spot as we found all the summer. But I could list ten times that number of inns fascinating on the outside, only to have the heart broken in your ribs when you entered. If the



WINCHESTER



NETLEY ABBEY

king would just ask me, expenses paid, to furnish complete the old inns of England—me! King, King, do it! Only he would have to promise to cut off the head of any innkeeper who superimposed one framed aunt, nay one glass bead, upon my handiwork.

Tea over at the Spread Eagle, and as many old beamed rooms admired as we dared peer into, we set forth in sunshine to explore what was, before its partial destruction by fire in 1789, probably "as beautiful and complete a Tudor house as could be seen in all England," and is today one of the finest ruins of Tudor houses to be seen in the land. "House"—it is nearer a castle in size. Ruins, yes, but so much still standing, thanks to careful reconstruction, it was no great labor that quiet sunny afternoon to close the eyes a bit and picture Edward VI during his only "progress" through his country being, as he himself reported, "marvelously, yea rather excessively banketted" in the Great Hall, the hall so great that eleven life-sized bucks carved in oak stood on brackets above the wainscoting and took up no more space than one lap-dog in a modern apartment house.

Easier still to vision Elizabeth herself with her horses and retinue, her "boxes" and little vanities, being met with poetry for the occasion at the great gates, and music composed for a queen's ears.

For once she did visit Cowdray, to repay the loyalty of Lord Montague for his help against the Spanish Armada. Ah me, some members of the household must have felt it a questionable manner in which to show gratitude, especially the inmates of the enormous kitchen. Or did the popularity of the Virgin Queene permeate right down to the agitated boys who turned the spits? The slaughter that took place for a "progress" of the queen! On a certain three day visit of hers, there were once consumed 67 sheep and 34 pigs, 4 stags and 16 bucks, 1,200 chickens, 363 capons, 33 geese, 6 turkeys, 237 dozen pigeons, not to mention partridges, pheasants, game of all sorts, a cart load and two horse loads of oysters, 2,500 eggs and 430

pounds of butter, to say nothing of the fish. In Cowdray for her first breakfast 140 geese and 3 oxen were served. Mustn't life have been simpler if one incurred no specially kindly feelings on the part of one's sovereign? And yet the color and excitement a "progress" of the queen lent to living! To the end, though she kept it up year after year, Elizabeth was in her element when she went visiting, and to the country her comings and goings meant a never-ending thrill.

Nor was life in a Tudor mansion, if Cowdray is any example, ever a simple informal "just-help-yourself" matter when there was no prospect of a royal visitor. A Viscount Montague compiled a "Booke of Household Rule" in which minute instructions were given for thirty-six different ranks of servants, and many ranks had many numbers. When the noble Viscount Montague was entertaining himself only, while the meat was roasting in the kitchen, orders were that no one might "stande unseemely with his backe towarde" the same. The yeoman usher must solemnly kiss the table cloth before he laid it upon the table. When the roast was being carried through the hall to the Viscount's private dining chamber, every man had to uncover respectfully as it passed. For a simple more or less lonely little meal it was enough if the usher and but six gentlemen were in attendance, but for company there was a procession. For all that, Montagues with or without their sovereigns still ate with their fingers years on end. Was there ever a more noble mansion in which to eat with one's fingers? What if to-day it is little more than a shell? It once belonged to the group of Tudor mansions which called forth an Elizabethan writer's ire: "Outrageous is the great and sumptuous building of our time . . . also it beggareth the greatest number of them that take pleasure therein. . . ." Cowdray was built around quadrangle courts in its fair park, with its stream where netfuls of fish were caught to lay at Elizabeth's feet, its lawns where bucks were downed by hounds for her delight. Here was the chapel where the fifth Viscount Montague proceeded to shoot his chap-

lain because he began Mass before his lordship's arrival. The Viscount had to hide in a priest's hole for fifteen years, so 'tis said, to escape the vengeance of his neighbors. His wife, dressed in white that she might be taken for a ghost, would steal out to join him at night.

List the rooms and you sense a mansion of those days: the Velvet bedchamber, Lord's withdrawing room, hexagonal tower, Queen Elizabeth's bedchamber, the Yellow bedchamber, Red Damask bedchamber, Blue dressing room, Old Chintz bedchamber, Lord Viscount Montague's room, the Buck Hall. . . . Nor is there a trace of a moat, nor need of one since the first stone of Cowdray was laid. The windows, and such windows on all sides! It was only that morning we had seen stern relentless Bodiam. Peace, comfort, plenty. . . .

Plenty? Shall we look up the long avenue from Cowdray House to its wrought iron gates leading onto the road and catch a glimpse of the beggars? "For notwithstanding that they be never so impotent, blind, lame, sick, old or aged, yet are they forced to walke the countries from place to place to seek their releefe at every man's doore, except they will sterve or famish at home. . . . You can lightlie go no way but you shall see numbers of them at everie doore, in everie lane and in everie poore cave. . . ." Surely they cheered the Queen as she rode forth—except a few Bolsheviks. (They had good right to cheer at that, for Elizabeth passed wise Poor Laws.)

In the seventeenth century Cowdray was occupied by Parliamentary troops, and a sorry mess they no doubt left behind them. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the last Lord Montague, given evidently more to fanciful exploits than the responsibilities of family or estate, was drowned while shooting the Rhine Falls near Schaffhausen, and not so far from our own Stein am Rhein. Isn't, as we say, the world small? The messenger sent to England with the cruel tidings crossed the messenger sent from England with the news that Cowdray was burnt almost to its total destruction.

What a jump. Hardly had we done scrambling about Cowdray House than we were at Bedales School in Petersfield, Hampshire. Not, dear Queen Elizabeth, merely a boys' school, not a home where a few daughters of the nobles learn a bit of this and that, but a co-educational boarding school, right up to college age. The good Queen gasps—and I'll wager claps her hands. Couldn't Roger Ascham write of his royal pupil apparently quite honestly, "the constitution of her mind is exempt from female weakness, and she is endued with a masculine power of application?" (This at sixteen.) "French and Italian she speaks like English; Latin with fluency, propriety and judgment. . . . Nothing can be more elegant than her handwriting. . . . She read with me almost the whole of Cicero and a great part of Livy. . . ." And after she was Queen did she not take to translating Xenophon? Nor does one feel she would have warmed to a world of females only. The Virgin Queen would approve of Bedales.

In fact, perhaps it was more of an effort for us to get used to Bedales the first moment or so than it might have been for Elizabeth. From all sides issued armed knights, banners, maces and spears, and ladies in flowing velvet robes. Ourselves dressed in jersey suits and driving a Baby Austin felt out of place indeed. We at last cornered a very pretty bobbed-haired girl of sixteen running along in the traditional English school girl's uniform of pleated blue serge with white wash blouse, barefoot, tanned, and learned that the dress rehearsal of Henry IV was in progress.

Our interest in Bedales School was a very personal one. June had been entered and would have been starting her school year there in September had she not been the recipient of a scholarship at the International School in Geneva, which seemed too fortunate a happening to turn down. When she saw Bedales it was all the Baby Austin could do to wrench her away. Certainly if anyone had offered us a scholarship at Bedales too we should have lost our hair entire trying to make up our minds which school to choose.

There are always plenty of friends, relations and strangers to be outraged with the fact that you are not enthusiastic enough over the range of educational possibilities in your own country to bring up a child in the United States.

If parents believe in their ability and right to force children to regulate their lives contrary to group standards, or if certain children are of themselves so independent of those standards they make little or no impression, then bring them up in New York or Wampotuk Falls or Bulgaria; they will be either different and utterly miserable; or different and somewhat peculiar, though in line to make some startling contributions to the culture of their age. But if one possesses rather earthy, entirely normal young, at certain years agonizingly anxious to conform to the standards of their peers, and if at the same time a parent realizes she has no right to demand nonconformity, the prospect of those years in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century can cause adult concern. Well then, run away! Let the saints extol martyrdom; we'll stay and be burnt only when the cause seems worth the kindling and the kerosene. Most continental schools for girls, such as I know anything about, are not to my liking. For such a comparatively short time has it seemed worth bothering to educate "the Female Younger Sort," as a good soul of 1675 called them. The fact of it is, as far as I'm concerned, all girls schools could follow Old Winchelsea into the sea, wherever they are. Herding girls off together is a quite dreadful idea and somebody will look back some day upon the destruction God will visit upon such a travesty and be turned to salt. I am, in case there is any misunderstanding, for co-education. Making it work in a land where boys and their parents insist upon boys' schools is more than I can fathom. No one has asked me to fathom it, fortunately. But since co-education is one of the few principles I really hold to with almost a burning enthusiasm, I can at least gaze over the far horizon, if nothing looms near, to see if any place comes the dawn. And I see

Bedales! Bedales has been a co-educational school for over thirty years.

One of the treasured memories of the summer will always be the supper at Bedales. The great high dining hall with its leaded Tudor window almost filling one end and looking out upon the Hampshire countryside, some twenty oaken refectory tables seating ten each, and in troop the most healthy, wholesome, happy looking lot of boys and girls one could find in civilization. At supper they are allowed to sit wherever they please, within age groupings, for the other meals a definite seating arrangement is adhered to. That late afternoon at one table there might be four girls and six boys, half and half, six girls and four boys; at one table there happened to be one girl and nine boys. They were all scrambled together as the Lord meant them to be, and nothing more natural exists than the talk and laughter that filled the room. My soul expanded as did a pilgrim's of old when after a long wandering through barbaric lands he had come at last to the shrine—and safety.

Boys and girls share together class room work and all school activities except certain games, and swimming. The pool is not big enough for both at the same time, hence boys one day, girls the next, and a chance for sun baths as the Lord meant them to be taken. The Lord must love Bedales.

Ah me! Well, the International School in Geneva is co-educational too, or all the scholarships in the world would not have tempted us. Still its co-educativeness is not as yet as robust, assured, courageous a type as Bedales.

To Portsmouth in the worst hail storm I have ever seen and Portsmouth the worst town to drive in. Every citizen wheels a baby-buggy and is deaf and prefers the middle of the very narrow main street. They step to one side for a char-a-banc only. We nearly lost our lives, literally, locating Dickens' birth-place and gave up the rest. Subdued we sought Portchester and its Roman-Norman ruins, filled that summer evening with adults and children at games—mainly of course cricket. Every place in England—cricket. If anyone knows of a book explain-

ing cricket to foreign morons I should be grateful to hear of it. We pestered book stores on the subject and were sold elementary volumes which took it for granted every two-legged being is born knowing what a half-century is, the crease, the extra-cover, the run to wicket, mid off, mid on, square leg, even if you are all of three before you appreciate a "goggie." As for scoring: "Scourfield-Garland at 44 played right across a dropping ball on the leg stump . . . 177 for no wicket . . . Winlaw-Smith drove Keenlyside twice for 6, but was stumped in the same over at 234 . . ." And every good, solid, prosperous, self-made American must react to this sporting item winsomely: "Eton had three-quarters of an hour *before tea* and in that time scored 72 runs for one wicket." (Italics ours.)

That night it sounded to my ears as if we were trying to sleep at the meeting of all Celtic, Roman, Saxon, Norman and post-war roads in England—at which spot stood the Red Lion Hotel in Fareham, possessed of a thriving tan-yard, a steam flour-mill and potteries for flower pots. "It is a singularly unattractive little town," says a guide book. It is a singularly noisy little town at night.

CHAPTER 4

TO NETLEY ABBEY, PERSONALLY CONDUCTED; A LINER AT
SOUTHAMPTON BRINGS PEACE TO THE YOUNG; ROMSEY BRINGS
SATISFACTION TO ALL; WINCHESTER STILL MORE



THE next morning we were off to see our second ruined abbey. Before the summer was done we were to see most of the famous and some of the rarely mentioned ruined abbeys of the British Isles. About Netley, our first of size, I feel a bit the way we did about Shere. I wonder if anyone else ever heard of Netley, or could find it—if England herself knows it is there. Certainly we should never have located it had it not been for a young Englishman striding down a road, hatless, pipe in mouth.

Englishmen awe me. If I were taking seven months to go round the world in a sailing vessel and there was only one other passenger and he an Englishman, I should never dream of so much as saying "good morning," until perhaps the last minute I might say "goodbye," just out of devilment, to see the look of polite uneasiness come over his face at such familiarity. Therefore it was painful to me in my extremity to be forced to ask a well-bred looking Englishman if we were on the right road to Netley Abbey. Nor shall I be at all able to quote his English correctly. It was to the general effect: "I say, raaather not. Going in quite the wrong direction, aren't you?"

"Where do we turn off this road?"

"I say, suppose I get in and ride along with you. I just missed my bus anyhow. I can show you the way better than explain it."

Of course we wouldn't-trouble-you-for-the-world-taking-you-quite-in-the-opposite-direction-etc., etc.

And besides where could we put him? We filled the front; our luggage completely filled the rear.

"I say, couldn't I sit on the back and hang my feet over?"

By the time we got to Netley Abbey we were one hundred per cent chummier than the Englishman and I could have been on that seven months trip. In a spirit of almost abandoned friendliness, he helped eat a basket of fresh strawberries we had just bought along the roadside. As we reached Netley, by that brief time almost calling each other by our first names, he said: "I say, are you interested in gardens?" Gardens! Well, he had friends living close to Netley and he'd like to show us their gardens, if we'd care to see them.

Directly across the road from Netley Abbey is a great battlemented stone mansion set in a garden of gardens. It belongs to Lady C—— who was "in residence," so we'd not bother her ladyship, but the head gardener would show us the roses. The head gardener was all kindness and enthusiastic over the idea of showing us the roses and June and I had never seen such roses, and every other flower growing in Hampshire in the month of June. We wandered path after path with the gardener and this most agreeable friend of her ladyship.

"Would you like to see another?"

The other was behind Netley Abbey, with a lake where our Englishman had won a fishing competition just the day before. His life seemed mainly made of fishing, hunting, motor-boating, flying, motor-cycling and automobiling. A gardener and the sportsman were again our escorts, and again such flowers!

Leaving June and the Englishman to take pictures, I crept off to look upon Netley Abbey unescorted.

Ruined abbeys are like pictures or cathedrals, or a thousand other things in this world—the one to make a special appeal to me may make less or none to you. To me Netley was one of the three loveliest abbeys of the summer. So little confidence do I possess in my own judgment of anything to do with art and architecture (I love what I love and find so few words to tell why), that it was not until I came across a book by no less an author than Ralph Adams Cram, that I realized my opinion of Netley was no ill-founded delight, but was shared by a great architect. All summer I kept thinking of those, to me, perfect Gothic arches—true and brilliant Gothic arches, Cram called them—rearing their wholly satisfying lines against the green of great trees, shut away in their seclusion and no human being but myself treading that turf all about and gazing at tapering grey stones traced against green leaves. Never had a whisper or a word come to me that this beauty was to be seen in England. Netley Abbey. . . . Does no one realize it is there? Yet an architect can write: "It is a thing of almost unimaginable beauty . . . perhaps the most wholly lovely thing amongst all the abbeys of Great Britain." I could have clapped my hands for such appreciation of my Netley. And then I read Walpole's: "They are not the ruins of Netley Abbey but of Paradise. Oh, the Purple Abbots! What a spot they have chosen to slumber in!"

Our sportsman friend appeared not to share Walpole's, Mr. Cram's and my enthusiasm for Netley Abbey.

We tried to thank him for his kindness for showing us the gardens as we said goodbye. "I say, I'd like to ride along toward Southampton with you." Well, well, hang your feet over the back as long as you like. In his burst of friendliness he offered to buy the car from us at the end of the summer for ten pounds more than any dealer would offer, whereat he got a letter out of his pocket and presented me with the envelope so that I would know how to reach him. When we at last let him down, he called, "I say, drop me a card sometime!" That was too much. In my embarrassment over an Englishman

turning out so utterly untrue to form I called "Thank you, I shall!" and fussed for two miles because I had gone to work and said thank you to a man who asked me to drop him a card. But I never did have such a shock to my conception of national characteristics. He must have been sober that early in the morning.

Southampton—land in Southampton, leave from Southampton. This time we learned to know a bit about Southampton, but everything in the city itself fades into insignificance compared to June's thrill from hair to toes over going aboard the *Aquitania*. It was being loaded at the pier, not a sign of passengers for several days yet. The daughter's diary has a somewhat plaintive note about here, poor lamb. "Since my less beauty-loving soul was a little brimming, I made up my mind to see the *Aquitania*." I was never traveled with when young; I've never been traveled with much when old, except as I've lead helpless offspring about. Try as I do to remember that young folks can get their fill very soon, plan as I may sufficient breaks to the wearisomeness of looking at things they rarely can care as much about as an adult, I still fall short of giving them respite enough. Traveling with anyone is a very ticklish business, unless people are wise enough to part in the morning and meet again at night. What is your thrill may be my bore, when you are lame in the knees, I may still yearn to climb three cathedral towers. All the difficulties are intensified when one traveler is young. It is so easy to make sightseeing an agony for the 'teens—indeed it needs care to keep it from becoming that to oneself. I cannot let myself imagine what hara-kiri, fire and pillage I would commit if anyone was in a position to keep me looking at things longer than I wanted to look. What with so many more parents taking children to Europe nowadays, it may be an easier matter to get recruits for a future European War, if and when. I can hear a male person in his twenties or thirties, still rankling over a summer in his early 'teens, call "Here's my chance to set fire to Paris!"

—or Rome—or Berlin—or wherever he was dragged about to sightsee.

So, June brought peace to her soul by exploring the *Aquitania*, and knowing she would enjoy it more alone, she went alone and I sat in the car and caught up in my diary and baked. "A little party formed, led by a very good looking waiter, we began the examination. I really didn't know that a boat could be that grand. . . ." Alas for the S.S. *Caronia*, but a few hours before in her mind the most splendid ship afloat.

"Our next victim was Romsey. Mom had to see the abbey." Perhaps the most attractive church to me in all England, since it is Norman architecture I love most in churches, and Romsey is very Norman and very well preserved, indeed all but perfect. Such of the original abbey as had not been destroyed by the Danes was old when William landed at Pevensey, the rest had been newly built by Canute and under the control of Benedictine nuns. The daughter of the king who succeeded Alfred the Great was its first abbess, and a line of high-born Saxon ladies retreated to Romsey's cloistered walls. Women did not live such a gay and varied life outside the cloister in those drafty and troubled years that they made an unmeasurable sacrifice of comfort and companionship when they took the veil. In fact there came years when to be an Abbess of an influential nunnery must have been about as interesting a job for women as mediæval times afforded. King Henry I married his good Queen Maud out of Romsey Abbey. It was while Mary, the daughter of King Stephen, was Abbess of Romsey that the present abbey church was built, toward the end of the twelfth century. When the King whom Cobbett always refers to as merely "the wife-killer" suppressed and pulled down the abbey buildings, the townspeople were allowed to buy the church, and save it, for one hundred pounds.

Not many things in a cathedral or great church call forth a sudden reaction of adoration in the unchurchly. There is a very ancient, small, crude, Saxon rood, perhaps over 1000 years old, a table of soft mellowed wood draped in orange-red and

gold stuff, the whole effect such that I could have dropped on my knees more easily than remain standing. Outside in the church wall is another equally ancient Saxon crucifix, both clearly Byzantine in influence; in neither is the Christ nailed and drooped in death, but merely holding His arms along the cross, eyes open and looking out upon the world, victorious. . . .

There sounded a pell-mell stampede under the quite perfect Norman arches. Never had I heard such sounds of life in any church. A little old woman, in what appeared to be a nun's dress, looked up from where she was sewing, smiled at a group of headlong children, and went on with her stitches. I watched the children deposit flowers in one corner, kneel for a second, and run out. "That's our children's corner," the woman sacristan explained, "and I say, how can you expect children to make use of it if they can't be natural about it? We tried to keep them quiet for a while but it never worked. The main thing is to let them feel they have a corner of the church all their own to use for themselves. They seem to like it better if they can run there. Children don't walk much, do they?"

If then one would have a rare Norman treat in England, let it be at Romsey . . . and have tea, be sure, next King John's Hunting Box, A.D. 1200.

And now was to come one of the richest experiences of the whole summer—Winchester. Why will a thirteen year old girl be loath to spend more than one hour in Canterbury, and yet after three days have to be dragged from Winchester? Because Winchester is Winchester. She could indeed agree with the nineteenth century verse:—

"We lyketh ever, lengere the bet
By Wyngester, that joly citè."

Who could ever leave Winchester willingly? Turn into High Street—and you are lost to the world, except the world of Winchester. Heaven knows that is world enough! For Winchester is almost all of England; in 1897 the city celebrated

its thousandth civic birthday. But what is a thousand years to Winchester? The Briton was there 2000 years ago, and then the Roman in his day. In 827 the first king of all England was crowned in Winchester. It was the capital of Saxon Alfred, of Danish Canute; Edward the Confessor was crowned in Winchester; William the Conqueror made the city a joint capital with London, and was crowned in both. The English "Chronicles of Alfred" was created in Winchester, there Domesday Book was compiled. It possesses one of the grandest cathedrals in England and the oldest boys' public school, besides—besides everything else it possesses.

But suppose Winchester had only the cathedral and its Close, Winchester College, and the Hospital of St. Cross—and here you have three foundations which, once appreciated and understood a bit, would mean a richer comprehension of what went to build England, and what we should be meeting again and again throughout our summer.

To walk down between the rows of tall limes leading to the cathedral, to step from the afternoon light into that great long, cool, arched sanctuary of the nave—Winchester surely possesses one of the great architectural experiences for a traveler. It is well to stay long enough in the town so that one can come back, and back again.

If cathedrals had memories—somehow it seems impossible to think of them as not thus endowed—how strange these modern years must seem! There was such ardour to those earliest centuries! Can the more or less objective admiration of architecture make up to a cathedral for the fervor which reads into every stone a prayer, a tribute, and in return a benediction? Granted that a cathedral might not know what went on within the innermost heart, did not the years mean far more when they were filled from earliest morn till dark with prayers and masses, chantries for the living and the dead, granted even the cathedral knew just what was paid by the living, what was willed by the dead for those prayers and masses and chantries. What can that great soul of a cathedral look down upon now

to compare with the daily procession around and through its arches—color, candles, incense, hymns? And what to me must have all but broken the heart of a cathedral nurtured these centuries on such a contrast—the cold grey bleakness, where once all was color, color! I cannot think what comes over the world that it lives sometimes centuries on end, and more or less resignedly, in such a chill of colorlessness. To have seen Winchester cathedral when it was filled with tombs and chantries and chapels, each glowing warm and alive with one radiant tint after another! If anyone is doubtful of the beauty that once resided in the color of old tombs, let him go to a wee village called Ewelme in Oxfordshire, walk up the hill to the small church and, with or without the lovable sacristan to show him round, look upon the tomb of the Duchess of Suffolk. It is to me the most beautiful in all England, and largely because of the color. Restored? Only in part. At any rate it is there, and no doubt once there was more. Then see if you still think churches and what goes in them should remain cold grey stone.

To feel some spirit almost vibrant in a cathedral like Winchester is to suffer with the sheer volume of what it has lived through. Perhaps, built into its foundations, there was carried over something of that tremendous unlettered fervor of the Saxon who got together stone and mortar and painfully reared his early church. Not good enough, not big enough for the sons of the sons of the sons of these Saxons. Build better! Build larger! As for the Normans and the new England their influence created—pull down the poor little hard-built Saxon edifice—what gesture is this before a Christ so powerful, a Virgin so pure? You Norman and early English builders, gods seemed to lodge in your very fingers! Did you never sleep? Cathedral after cathedral after cathedral. . . . By the end of the fifteenth century, four hundred years of building, each age according to its lights of what must be most acceptable, because most perfect before heaven. The great cathedral was never built for you and me to gaze upon or even for our prayers; it

was labored over century after century for Benedictine monks to worship in. Monks and Prior to supervise and regulate the payment of funds, a master mason for architect and his assistant masons, on down to the lowly drawers of water and hewers of wood. . . . Four hundred years off and on of each doing the day's work, and there today stands Winchester. . . . Ah yes, today a few pray, some chant, the choir sings . . . but the cathedral knows the difference. June and I did not think even to cross ourselves as we entered. Yet close to nine hundred years must have left a cathedral wise and resigned. If we departed without a prayer, as the church is wont to measure prayers, we left our intangible homage of thanksgiving, which we dare think for the moment means something even to stones. . . . Outside, one must give thanks again for the cathedral Close. Lawns, trees, flowers, dignified old canonical buildings, the ancient monastery walls. . . .

Out through the thirteenth century King's Gate, over it the church of St. Swithins (wretched saint, he, who sees to it, except when thwarted in some violent way, that it rains most of the English summer), turn left and on down College Street, along flowers and walls to Winchester College.

A man must grant that no cathedral signifies in our age what it once did—today it implies architecture more than it means worship. But stand in front of Winchester College and try to sense the cumulative rôle of what those buildings mean this year in England—nay, one must say the British Empire. There is no power or means to measure such a force. You and I, had we never heard of Winchester College, insensibly read it into the word "Englishman" every time we use it. For Winchester College was the first great public school in England, the forerunner of that education which is the inseparable part and parcel of what the world thinks of, indeed what most decidedly he himself thinks of, as the English gentleman.

Bishop William of Wykeham was one of the great figures of the English fourteenth century. He was the architect who supervised the carrying out of much that was finest in Win-

chester Cathedral. Stones exert no potency of themselves, except to crumble and fall; once a building is done the dynamics of it cease,—discounting the inspiration of its static existence on beholders. William of Wykeham founded two schools, and the potentialities of these have permeated the entire national life of the country: New College, Oxford, and Winchester College, its secondary school.

It was in 1378 that formal permission was granted by the Pope to William of Wykeham, himself sorely tried because of his own lack of education and the paucity of opportunity about him for others to receive more, for the foundation of a college of “seventy poor scholars, clerks, to live college-wise and study grammar near the city of Winchester.” It was Wykeham himself who designed and saw to the erection of the harmonious and dignified buildings which are with certain additions the Winchester College of today. Almost six hundred years then has the school been carrying on under the same roofs, some of the traditions unbroken for a good part of that time.

Does one need to be looking upon the actual fourteenth century buildings to feel something of what they have stood for? Today there are Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Rugby, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury—with Winchester the seven great public schools of England. Earth from Winchester College was transported to Eton for its founding, that it might draw its first sustenance from hallowed soil. In reality there are more than twenty public schools stamping their definite mark upon the upper class British youth. It was William of Wykeham’s Winchester that gave them their distinctive features. What is bound up in the expression “Public School,” means to be wholly or almost altogether a boarding school, under some form of public or corporate, as against one man, control. It is non local, not a private adventure for private gain; and lastly, and what has played a more far-reaching rôle in the lives of the thousands of boys who have attended them these centuries on end, the discipline of the school in large part is in the hands of the boys themselves. In other words the sixth or highest

form monitor, prefect or preposter system, along with the institution of the "fag," or younger boy acting under orders from an older. For years there has been growing into the idea of the public school a development which did not, strictly speaking, belong to Wykeham's plan: it has become definitely a school for the aristocrat and plutocrat. Yet in the original statutes, Wykeham, besides his seventy poor scholars, allowed for a certain number of "sons of nobles and influential persons" as commoners or students living in common, together with his seventy scholars, who were never conceived of, however, as coming from the "lower classes." Even the idea of poverty connected with those seventy scholarships is a thing of the past, if it ever held in any strictness. Today there is a stiff competitive examination, and to be chosen as one of the seventy is honor indeed.

What an almost incomprehensible history education has passed through, is always passing through, in every land! To read of Winchester, knowing its position, is to rub one's eyes and demand to know why any boy ever went there—and then realize there has never been any great discrepancy between life in and life outside schools, during any era. For centuries the day began at five, sometimes four, with ablutions in cold water, outside and unprotected, Latin psalms, chapel, school until nine—school being Latin and Greek, and nothing but Latin and Greek,—and then at long last breakfast. Growing boys up for four hours, and at that the first meal was only for boys under sixteen! Would a cautious parent know what her darling got for breakfast—and at one of the great schools of England after four hours of school?—provided he was of an age to get anything at all. Bread and beer. After this breakfast came mass in chapel again, school till eleven, lessons to prepare, and at twelve—dinner. From one to five, school work again, chapel again, supper, work in chambers till eight. Chapel yet again, and the horrible day was ended.

To read even a scholarly book on Winchester written by a "Wykehamite," as a Winchester student is called, needs

a glossary. The school has built up through the centuries a vocabulary which is Greek to the outsider. You read for instance that the boys may have been "allowed on Hills on fine Remedies." You guess "on Hills" but who could know intuitively that a Remedy is a half holiday? "Toy-time" is evening preparation, the desk being a "toy." "The game consisted of a prolonged hot." And then you learn that "hot" is scrum in Winchester football, or "to hot" is to push. "To mug" is to work; a boy ill and confined to the sick room is "continent." If he has been continent, on recovery he "comes abroad." "Up to books" means in class . . . "books" in old Wychimania having designated certain old benches.

Little by little the school, as with all schools, became less monastic in regime, more space and time allotted to play, more and better food and sleeping quarters, yet for the most part laws codified in the sixteenth century held until the beginning of the nineteenth. Until late in the eighteenth century it was still a crime to look out of the window.

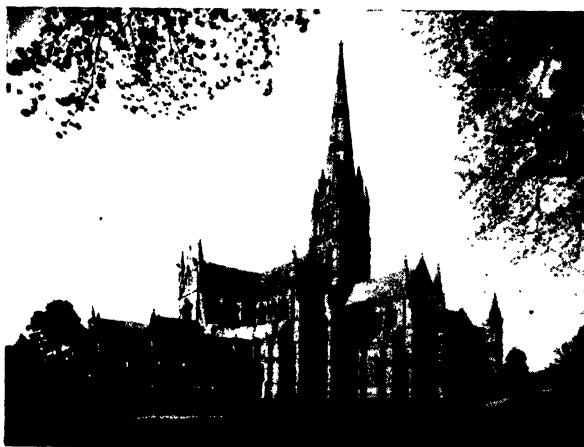
"The sleeping chambers in Wickham's and Cloister and Conduit galleries were draughty, inhabited by rats and scarcely large enough to prevent the beds touching each other, or the heads of their owners touching the ceiling." This in the eighteenth century. One hour a day of play in a small field. In 1793 a prefect was found listening to a band in the cathedral close. "Leave out" for Easter was therefore refused the entire school.

Today? Seventy scholars, as five hundred years ago, the more brilliant among the students and fourteen applicants for every vacancy, wearing black gowns more or less as have been worn for over five hundred years. Only today in summer they wear stiff straw hats with the gowns, which would have startled the past into sleeplessness. Every boy uncovers as he crosses Chamber Court, except the prefects, as for hundreds of years. Instead of the ten commoners Wykeham allowed for, there are almost four hundred. Playing fields in perfect condition stretch in their wide expanse of green to the river.

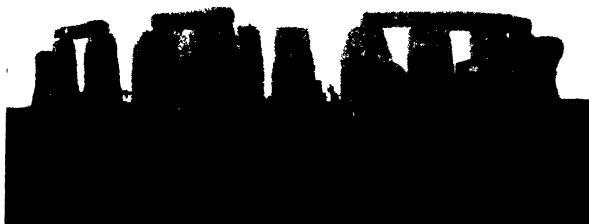
And there we stood looking at the great dining hall, over sixty feet long and forty feet high, where for hundreds of years Wykehamites have eaten together. The fire in the middle of the room is no more; the tub still stands by the screen into which left-over meat used to be thrown to be distributed afterwards to old women; the old wooden trenchers are today in use at breakfast and tea (our supper), though plates are used for lunch. The great oak doors are still secured by a heavy wooden bolt, formerly justified by the needs of juniors as late as the eighteenth century, when an early entrance into hall "made all the difference between a meal and a fast." Life must be pleasanter. "Juniors have no longer to see to the wants of exacting prefects and dodge the ground ashes of hard-hearted tolly-keepers (once seven seniors not prefects). One of their functions was to stand by the screen in Hall and lash any juniors they saw idling." Indeed the relations between older and younger boys are today on a far kindlier basis, yet in most if not all public schools energetic "lickings" are still the rule, usually administered by upper class students. No longer is there ale.

As to the curriculum through the centuries, up to a public commissioner's report some seventy years ago, there had been scant change in what English public school boys learned since public schools were founded! In the last fifty years they have changed far more than in the five hundred previous. Schools like Bedales and others, not co-educational, have been formed in part as protest against what to many educators is still too hide-bound a curriculum, too inelastic an attitude toward the boy's personality on the part of the great public schools.

We could not have timed our Winchester College visit at a more auspicious moment, or gotten richer returns out of it. We visited the College in the morning. As we stood at the entrance gate the whole school trooped by, black gowns, straw hats—and if English boys in their late 'teens are not good looking, when they are good looking at all, Heaven sent me



SALISBURY CATHEDRAL



STONEHENGE

crooked eyes (and June!). It was a day of days for Winchester—the annual cricket match with Eton. Were we there?

What a sight it was, the broad green cricket field surrounded with rows of chairs in a great circle where sat and visited and wandered about the most well-bred and best-looking English people I have ever seen—old and young Wykehamites and Etonians, fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, friends. The day was perfect, allowing tall slow moving women to wear the flimsiest of summer frocks and broad hats against a background of the pavilions for refreshments, the age-old college buildings, the ancient city of Winchester, river, trees, hills. In true American fashion, having been told the game began at eleven, we rushed madly across fields and streams to be there on time, only to learn they were to play until six forty-five or seven that evening, and from ten-thirty to six forty-five the next day! It gave us time to assault a bookstore once more. What is more exasperating than watching a game you know nothing about? The friendly and most agreeable bookstore man did all he could to enlighten us personally besides selling us books, but like all Englishmen, he could not conceive of such ignorance as ours, and never got back far enough. "Now suppose there's a snick or a bye. . . ." "If a batsman runs a single. . . ." We had him once. He turned to June in some despair and said: "Surely you know the name of Hobbs!" She looked him in the eye: "Surely you know the name of Babe Ruth!" They were even.

The third institution of Winchester to interest us out of the ordinary was the Hospital of St. Cross. Strange how the word Hospital has come to be applied as a place for the sick, whereas it began with the idea of guests, and came to have as one of its meanings in England a place of shelter for the needy. Such was the Hospital of St. Cross, founded in 1136 and still functioning according to the statutes of its founder. Indeed there were really two foundations. Bishop Henry's of Blois, brother of King Stephen, was for "thirteen poor men, feeble and so reduced in strength that they can hardly or with diffi-

culty support themselves without another's aid." They were to be supplied with "garments and beds . . . good wheaten bread . . . and three dishes at dinner and one at supper suitable to the day, and drink of good stuff." Also a hundred other poor men were to have a daily dinner. Three hundred years later Cardinal Beaufort, Wykeham's successor in Winchester, added a second foundation, "the Alms House of Noble Poverty," not as the other for the poorest of the poor, but for those who once "had everything handsome about them," and had sustained losses. Soon it will be eight hundred years that at least thirteen poor, and five hundred years that at least nine Noble Poor have been cared for outside the gates of Winchester in their peaceful lovely quadrangle with its lawns and flowers set in the fields beside the Itchen. The poor brethren still wear their black gowns with the silver Jerusalem cross, the noble brethren their claret-colored robes. Each since 1445 has had a separate small suite of rooms, big enough for husband and wife, where now they cook their own meals instead of eating in Hall, as earlier. With its church dating back to the twelfth century, the whole place is venerable, peaceful, kindly, with quaint and ancient corners wherever the eye rests. Naturally every place is filled. I forget how many years the dear old soul who guided us around said he had to wait before he could get in. The number there must be in these hard times waiting rather anxiously for some poor brother to die and make room for one more! And each poor brother is well aware of the fact. Among the Noble Poor are two Oxford M.A.'s.

All over England we were to run into these quiet corners, and they number some of the most picturesque buildings in the country, where old people are living their last years free from anxiety because centuries ago some benefactor—let it be that he hoped thereby to spend less time in purgatory—saw fit to set aside something from his worldly goods to make the last years of a few of the faithful less troubled.

At the entrance to the Hospital of St. Cross is a doorway where any wayfarer may stop and, on asking, receive a horn of

beer and piece of bread. So has it been these hundreds of years on end. "*Any wayfarer?*" "*Any, only he or she must ask.*" And so, to feel my small place in that century-old chain, I asked, and received.

The books we could write on Winchester alone! Our Tudor God-Begot Hostel, the Great Hall on Castle Hill, begun by William the Conqueror, where hangs King Arthur's Round Table (be credulous!). Perhaps in part June's "I was never quite so sorry to leave a place as when we left Winchester" was due to the tennis courts. Our first late afternoon, "shushed out by a black robed figure because the Cathedral was retiring," we wandered here and there, loving each by-way; "our never tiring feet would not stop." At one corner we discovered small boys in their school grey or white flannels playing cricket. Open your eyes on any plot of ground big enough in England, and some one will be playing cricket. We edged along watching them until we found ourselves inside a stone wall, and realized the boys were playing in what was once the great courtyard of what was once Wolvesey Castle, using the ruins, to June's excitement, as places on which to hang their coats. We explored further and discovered a perfect lawn tennis court, flower rimmed, also surrounded by crumbling stones. Would ever we find a more ideal spot for tennis? Only to learn on inquiry that it was the bishop's private court. However, just over that wall there were four public courts, also surrounded with ivy-covered, ruined, castle embankments, a great tree here and there, the Cathedral and its Close just over another wall. We couldn't rush back to the hotel and our racquets fast enough. Nor did we ever enjoy tennis more than from eight to nine that soft summer evening in the ruins of the castle where Henry II stopped for shelter after the murder of Thomas à Becket, only to be tortured with the reproaches of the dying Henry of Blois, he of the Hospital of St. Cross, heaped upon his head; where Mary Tudor first met Philip of Spain before their marriage in Winchester Cathedral (and better had she never met him), where Sir Walter Raleigh heard sentence

passed upon him for conspiring against his King, which meant thirteen years in the Tower and final execution.

We retired at last, fed, happy and weary, in a room of the God-Begot House so close to the great illuminated and resounding clock protruding high over the middle of the street from the proximity of Queen Anne in the old Guild Hall across the way that midnight seemed as if the full moon itself were thrusting its brazen face within three feet of our windows and the thorough striking of twelve sounded like the Battle of Trafalgar and we the flagship.

We tore ourselves away from Winchester long enough to dash over the lovely miles to Bedales and back, to see "Henry IV"; and got ourselves finally away altogether only by solemn promises from the two of us to the two of us that we would come back—soon, soon!

And we smiled as we chugged up High Street over our gay sportive friend near Netley Abbey who had remarked: "I say, what are you going to Winchester for? It's nothing but an awfully old town, and they're going to have some fine motor-cycle races in Southampton!"

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CHAPTER 5

ON ENGLISH ROADS AND ENGLISH DOGS; THE WONDER OF STONEHENGE; EXETER AND A FEMALE SWEATER FOR A MALE CAVE. WE EXPOSE UNTRUTHS ABOUT DARTMOOR AND LEAVE PLYMOUTH MUCH FASTER THAN THE PILGRIMS



IT IS plain that, at this rate, our 5,252 summer miles are going to rival in size Gibbon's Decline and Fall. I have taken deep council with myself and have uttered an oath by my London gas fire that I shall from now on mention only highlights, and I have listed my highlights, and, by my oath, my honor compelled me to leave out so many names that I retired last night stricken. There is, however, no other way. Most especially I shall endeavor mightily to say nothing more about scenery. Even in my diary I gave up using adjectives. "We went along the most — oh well, from now on I'm just going to write 'a' road." If you have motored in England you know what English roads are like; if you have not you would be prone to decide anyone who enthuses as much over them as I must lack discrimination—they can't *all* be lovely beyond words! At the end of the summer, we decided that out of 5,252 miles in England, Wales, and Scotland, it was easily safe to say that "over 5000 miles" were just that. There is nothing like the roads of these Isles—but of course you must stay off numerous main roads, and all new roads laid for utility's sake.

We used Michelin maps all summer, June being route man. Michelin maps mark main roads in red, next in order in yellow, and more or less unimportant roads in white. As far as possible, no matter how less directly they might get us any place, we kept to white roads, and saw thereby some of the loveliest sights of the summer. One of the four times we came nearest to losing our lives was on a hedged, winding Derbyshire "white road," leading us into all sorts of fascinating bits of landscape and villages, when suddenly around a hedged curve lurched a truck that looked to us as big as a cathedral on wheels. Parker luck! It was the one spot on that road wide enough for us to make a quick swerve into the bank and be saved. The driver and his helper were overcome. They came dashing back to see if we had been hurt—not a scratch. "It never occurred to me to slow up," the driver explained. "I've never met a car on this road before!" He'll weary of slowing up, no doubt, before he meets another.

The one long ugly stretch of the summer was from shortly after Llangollen in Wales through the Black Country of one industrial town after another up into the Lake District. We drove over two hundred and fifty miles that day, trying to find an attractive spot, once Wales was behind us, to lay our heads—and twelve steady hours of rain. There are some meagre reaches in south Scotland. For that matter there are thankless stretches of unrewarding country here and there in England and Wales. For the most part, I close my eyes and dream off to mile after mile of all but perfect road-bed, hedged, wild-flowered, between rolling hills and trees, a church steeple in the distance; or amazing miles on end along the downs of the British Isles, those high soft-carpeted creases and slopes rolling forever and a day to the blue or grey sky. In Scotland we drove hours through hills of purple heather in full bloom and never would have believed the sight had our own eyes not been the reporters. Twice we came down hills on roads not charted since the Mappa Mundi had Britain crowded to the edge of the known world, *anti* the direct route to India. Why I am alive to

write a book, God alone knows. He has some plans afoot and needs my steady unemotional hand. Had those two stretches been longer and we yet alive, I'd say our car might possibly descend the Matterhorn. It could not ascend it because once we stuck on a hill. There was a sign at the bottom of that which implied that we would.

Speaking of roads, the matter is not closed until I have spoken my mind on the subject of English, Welsh and Scots dogs. (I have already elsewhere spoken it on the subject of French and Swiss dogs, and bicycles.) Whoever started the report that dogs were intelligent? Whoever started the report that sheep were not? Of the 7,632 dogs who came into our lives this summer, it seems to my bitter retrospections that 7,630 of them, in a manner which if not witless then must imply nothing but wilful intent to annoy and distract, went out of their way to stop directly in front of our car. If they had in mind, before eyeing our approach, to cross the road briskly, they deliberately dug their toes into the road to stop themselves one inch from our front wheels. Were they aged and with no intentions, until they saw us, of ever crossing any road again as long as they lived, they changed their minds at the strategic moment, creaked up on all fours, and wearily got themselves to within one inch of our speeding tires (tyres in England) and stopped. Once in Scotland I could not brake in time, this particular white animal dashed out into our path so suddenly, nor was there space to swerve. I ran over him—and felt nauseated and done with cars. June looked around; I couldn't. "He's running home for all he's worth!" I suppose that is it, really—British dogs have no respect for a Baby Austin.

Of the seventeen—or shall I say seventy—thousand sheep whose destinies for one brief moment came within our summer's orbit, every last one got out of our way. You got so that you just trusted sheep. It is enough to make a vegetarian of a motorist.

As to cows—well, you know cows. Let's not discuss cows . . . At least they give milk.

Planning the trip in the United States we had thought to make Stonehenge the prelude of the summer. Ten days after our start from London we purred over a hill in the Wiltshire Downs and ahead in the rolling treeless distance spied that circle of great stones. A jumble of Normans, Saxons, Elizabethans, Romans, Victorians had we assembled in our heads and hearts before ever we got back to what was the beginning of it all, for us—Stonehenge.

There are for each of us certain sights in this world we yearn to gaze upon above all others. For one they may include the Grand Canal in Venice, another the Coliseum, another the Taj Mahal. . . . Why our particular desires? As a rule we have no longer any recollection of their incipience—a book read years ago, a traveler's tale overheard, a picture. . . . One of the sights of England I had been conscious of longing to behold for years on end was Stonehenge. To some, both before and after seeing, it might mean nothing but a circle of grey stones. For me, before and after seeing, it held the genius, the perseverance, the strength, the daring, the courage, the wisdom of long-ago men whose blood was my blood, whose ability to meet life and develop beyond any immediate needs of merely keeping alive was as great for them in those dim millenniums of years ago as it is for those who look beyond meat and drink today. It humbles us, as we should be humbled; it exalts us, as we have a right to be exalted. There are few things in this world man ever wanted to do badly enough that he could not do. That is no virtue won by superior ability around 2000 A.D. It was true in 2000 B.C. Gaze upon Stonehenge and believe.

In reality Stonehenge, crisply stated to leave no chance to the imagination, is a circular earthwork three hundred feet in diameter within which stands a group of great stones. Stands? Most of them are fallen. No one yet knows the exact number which once formed a pattern never seen before or since in the western world, except the one example on the English Downs. Thirty mighty stones over thirteen feet from the ground formed the outer circle, every two bearing on their tenoned tops a thick

mortised stone lintel in such a fashion that the lintels dovetailed into one immense unbroken ring. Next came a circle of smaller "foreign" stones, six to eight feet high, next a majestic horseshoe of the ten mightiest stones of all, the highest two standing twenty-two feet from the ground, each one topped with its massive lintel. Within the great horseshoe stood a pattern of the smaller foreign stones, eight feet in height. Lastly, near the foot of the highest pair of stones lay a great flat boulder. Other large stones stand here and there outside the main pattern, yet concerned with it. So much you and I can see. Yet once beheld, for how many does this sight of it suffice?

When was it built?

Who built it?

How was it built?

And one question transcending perhaps all others—why? Why?

Not to one of the questions can there—ever?—be a definite answer. Over a thousand books have had their say, over a thousand spades have told their tale (one skilful turn of the sod can brush nine-hundred books of surmises off any shelf!). It is the spade which has done the most toward solving riddles perhaps forever unsolvable. It is the patient spade and the scientist's brain behind it which has dug out of the chalk downs of Wiltshire its answer to the question—*when?* Probably Stonehenge was built around four thousand years ago. Latest findings seem to disregard the fairly recent theory of Stonehenge as a temple of the sun, and its age therefore calculable from the heavens.

Who? Who reared those massive stones? The men built Stonehenge who were dwelling on the Wiltshire Downs four thousand years ago, and of them we know this and that: they were of small to middling size, those Neoliths, because for one thing we can see in many a museum their tools fashioned for small hands; they were still too primitive to have knowledge of metals; domestic animals to pull and haul they had none.

Then let there here be stated one further approach to truth,

indeed perhaps truth itself—this time not the work of the spade but of the microscope. In only one place in the British Isles could the “blue” or “foreign” stones have had their origin. They must have been brought from the Prescelly Range in south-west Wales to Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire—a distance of 180 miles!

Men slight of build, stones weighing tons, 180 miles . . . then *how?* What a question there! And yet it has been worked out, given time without end, man power almost without limit, rolling logs, leather ropes. . . . And those Welsh stones from the Prescelly Range were not the largest. Of those, the outer circle averaging eighteen feet in length and twenty-six tons each in weight, and the inner great horseshoe weighing thirty-five to forty tons a stone—most of them were transported twenty to thirty miles. But *how?* And how could they be stood upright? And how place tons of grooved lintels exactly so against the tenoned tops?

Why the colossal effort and skill involved? What lay behind this labor of years over the impossible, and yet achieved it? . . .

Perhaps everyone who has looked forward to Stonehenge is disappointed with reality. Salisbury Plain, which is not a plain, is so vast, a few grey stones so lost. . . . Stand under them, roam around and over them, lean against a giant stone rising almost seventeen feet above your head, rearing its tons over the Wiltshire Downs these last four thousand years, and you depart subdued, and the chances are a spark of awe kindled for the abilities of our own dim, far-back ancestors.

That evening in the Old George Hotel in Salisbury we read aloud a small book about Stonehenge bought nearby on Salisbury Plain. June then and there vowed she must go back and see it all over again. The next morning she went alone to the Salisbury Museum to see what more could be learned. When I joined her there she stood absorbed in the conversation of a heavy, animated gentleman peering at her through his glasses. Behold, it was no less than Mr. Stevens himself, curator

of the Museum, and author of the book we had read the night before. It was well over an hour he gave us of his time, showing us his prehistoric finds connected with Stonehenge, models, pictures, maps, plans, explaining detail after detail, answering query upon query. Then for a certainty could we hardly wait to get back to Salisbury Plain.

Indeed those were great riches crowded into few hours. All morning in Winchester seeing one fascinating sight after another, then Stonehenge, Old Sarum, Salisbury. How much of history and prehistoric architecture of the ages came alive within twelve hours! Stonehenge, a monument of the unwritten, unrecorded past; Old Sarum, a barren hill upon which once hundreds of years ago stood cathedral, castle, streets of houses, city walls, and returned its member to Parliament up to 1830; Winchester, with all that Old Sarum once possessed and much more, still standing; Salisbury with its cathedral and cathedral Close, exquisite, perfect above all others in England. Twelve hours! When I think of the Scotsman in Hudson's "Afoot in England," I do surely blush slightly over such a twelve hours and am a bit relieved that Mr. Hudson can never know of our sin. For when Mr. Hudson suggested to the strange Scotsman, after watching his interest and appreciation for the outside of Salisbury Cathedral, that they now see the interior, the Scotsman refused; it was enough for one day to see the outside of such a building. Whereupon Hudson compared him to a horrible American (horrible is my adjective, not the polite Hudson's) who had combined not only the inside and out of Salisbury, but Stonehenge, in one day.

It was well that the next day, after our second visit to Stonehenge, we looked upon nothing but close to one hundred miles of downs and hills and valleys, which would have hurt the nature-loving Mr. Hudson more than crowding four cathedrals into one day, until at last we reached Exmouth on the Channel. Exeter was a city, too big. We wanted a quiet corner where there would be nothing to do but catch up with our diaries and launder and play tennis and sprawl on the beach

and read and celebrate June's fourteenth birthday. Such a spot was Exmouth on the Channel.

When Sunday evening came and brought its group of the straggling, middle-aged Faithful wailing hymns in a circle on the beach, June remarked flippantly as to the effect of such sounds on God. I reminded her impressively that it was basically the same spirit which in its other days had reared Stonehenge and cathedrals. She went to the window, looked on the faltering singers and 'lowed she would like to see them get one stone to stand upright on Salisbury Plain. But there has been a need of people in the world just to think they were singing ever since there were voices and worship, and the ears of Heaven have purposely never been keenly attuned to tone or volume.

We got acquainted with Exeter from Exmouth. Three features stand out, the cathedral which we loved; the ancient Priory of St. Nicholas—only the Prior's house and guest wing are left, and these we roamed over from fascinating Norman undercroft, over eight hundred years old, to thirteenth century kitchen, to great guest hall, mainly fifteenth century, to private rooms, tower and garden. My way of looking at everything tends to be altogether too subjective and therefore valueless to anyone else. I love a picture I want to hang in my own home, houses I can imagine living in myself, views I would gaze upon from my own windows, old furniture I see in my own rooms. I go around annexing the world—what is not mine because *I* fail to love it, I tend to put to one side. June goes a step further. Every old house or castle she cared about all summer, she began at once then and there to furnish, settle down in and to start giving house parties. The Old Priory in Exeter won her heart and soul. She would stand in the doorway of the Prior's "solar," say, and exclaim "Do you know what I'd do with this room?" . . . It reminded me of the boys. They were always spying old boats in every watery place and announcing: "Boy, if that boat was mine do you know how I'd fix her? . . ."

The third memory of Exeter also reminded me indirectly of the sons. I wrote once elsewhere that the summer we jaunted through Germany when they were about June's age, the way they kept good-humored over sight-seeing was in every spare minute to discuss a marvelous superhuman cave they were going to dig in the hills behind their Swiss school when they got back. It grew to assume gargantuan proportions, furnishings became taxing to the lay mind in their complexities. June is a girl and incidentally, and as is normal, far more mature at her age than were the boys, therefore caves made no appeal; besides she had no one of her age to dig with her, had her mind been able to find relief from the cultural wear of sight-seeing through such a channel.

She hit upon the equivalent for her needs; in Exeter we bought wool for her to knit herself a sweater. It was an inspiration. Over and over again I could wander where I would, gaze on what I would. Instead of wearing June out, or boring her, she could sit blissfully in the car knitting and I take my time with complete peace of mind, knowing it made no difference to her when I got back. That knitting came out if I so much as stopped to read the guide book; it came out while we waited for tea to be served; it came out after a car crashed into us and we were biding our time to be rescued. It was the making of the summer for both of us. The boys never did get their cave dug, but June's sweater was finished and worn before the summer was done. She saw all of England that a girl her age could hold.

I AM hunting with a wicked gleam in my eye for ten of the ten writers I have read on Dartmoor. How wildly astray do I lead people? Ah, but I get letters and letters from strangers who wander forth to behold with their own eyes places I have described and no soul has upbraided me yet. Or don't up-braiders write? From the time we left London I saw Dartmoor looming ahead as an ultimate test of driving and personality. If

ever we crossed that somber, wild, eerie stretch and came out alive the other end, I could relax at last and be sure of the rest of the British Isles. It would be one of Life's Ordeals. Indeed the R.A.C. had not even routed us over Dartmoor. But the more we read the surer we were we had to have that experience. My uncensored diary reports: "It was oh so lovely!—only nothing like enough of it to suit us." We tried to take detours to prolong Dartmoor; one is over it altogether too soon. Of course motoring over Dartmoor is ridiculous anyhow. It is true that getting to Moreton Hampstead on the edge of the moors, where we lunched, we had our worst hills to date, but as June wrote, "the views we would get of hundreds of little rolling patches of different colored soil and grains, with green trees sprinkled here and there in great clusters, made it worth all these terrible hills. . . . Then started our trip across Dartmoor. All of a sudden every tree disappeared and in its place came short clumps of purple heather. It gives you the most isolated feeling in the world. There are no steep hills, but gently rolling ones, with prehistoric groups of stones at the summit of each 'tor' or higher hill. The road is a small line of lead that can be seen anywhere in the monotone expanse. . . . As you come over the top of a hill, farm lands and little villages surround you suddenly . . . and you are at home again."

Plymouth, what a time trying to find the historical spot from which our forefathers set sail! "Poor Mom would drive a few yards, stop, open the guide book, start again, come to the end of a street, stop again, open the guide book, back out and run into a back alley, stop, open the guide book. I'm afraid we did not fully appreciate Plymouth. We at last found our way to the Barbican pier, where the Mayflower set sail. Mom's romantic soul was immediately aroused but to me it looked like any other pier." And smelt to both us like any other pier. We disliked Plymouth exceedingly.

Nor was I utterly convinced that I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of leaving Plymouth behind via our first ferry. Is the car going to get down the steep incline onto that small

boat? Being first on, are the brakes going to hold or shall we glide quietly off the other end and into the Sound? Should we proceed genteelly up the steep stone bank on the other side, or stall? Ferries came to mean nothing perturbing in our lives, except that I don't believe any driver, be he winner of the Prix de Prix, could get on and off the ferry at Loch Leven the first time without at least one breath extra. We had respiratory difficulties from the time we saw what we had to cross, what we had to cross on and how, until we began to unpack and retire. But that is all far ahead in Scotland.

CHAPTER 6

THE BEAUTIES OF THE UNIVERSE IN CORNWALL, ESPECIALLY
POWEY, MULLION COVE, COVERACK AND SENNEN COVE. RE-
MARKS ON WHERE TO SLEEP IN ENGLAND

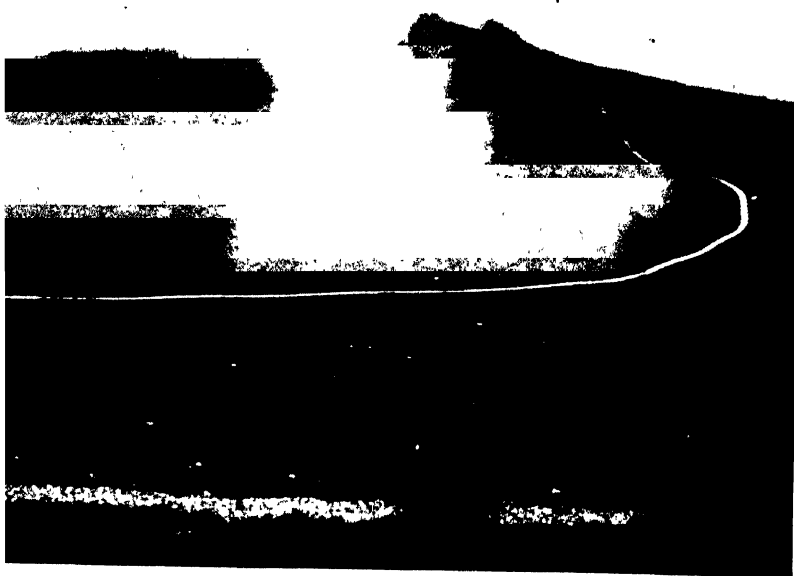


ONCE we had ferried across the Sound—it was Cornwall. There was a corner of England that had been beckoning me on for years of my life! Jack the Giant-killer was a Cornishman, King Arthur. . . . To see Cornwall. . . . Ah me, the soul is never satisfied. Now I would see Cornwall again.

We had thought of Cornwall as crag-bound, wind-swept, wild, more or less untouristed. If we broke an axle in Cornwall they would find our bodies seven years later. Like the grim eeriness of Dartmoor, we looked forward, almost, to not being found till seven years later. Cornwall must be like that! And then to leave the grime and bore of Plymouth and Devenport and, to quote June who describes the world much more fully than my diary ever does, “suddenly everything changed. Trees began to grow and we’d ride from one valley into another more beautiful. It was heavenly.” There was Cornwall being softly, greenly beautiful, and we had expected rocks. We got rocks aplenty before Cornwall saw the last of us.

If you would start Cornwall in a frame of mind to love it all, sleep your first night in Fowey. Fowey (pronounced, in

A DEVONSHIRE ROAD NEAR DARTMOOR



DARTMOOR AND HAY TOR

that kind way to make life easier which the English often practise, Foy) is one of those towns where one dare not dream of what it must have been like for charm before it was modernized. Just how long ago one should have slept in Fowey to see it in its mediæval glory I do not know. Considering its situation, its outlook, the windings of its narrow streets, it must have been one of England's delights. In 1930, June considered it "the most picturesque village I ever saw. I could have sworn I was in Italy but Mom tried her hardest to persuade me that I was not thinking of Italy. I still think it is, but anyway it was not England."

It was not England, in the sense that nothing in Cornwall seems English. The Cornishman himself talks about "going into England." A Devonshire man is a "foreigner." In race and language up to recent times, he and his Breton brother across the Channel in Brittany were closer than Cornishman and Devonshireman across the Tamar. Scenery, houses, people—racially, culturally, historically, it was more or less a world apart long after England became a land of the English. Therefore why should it not seem different? Is not its difference its fascination? From those far off days which cast a spell over some of us, those dim years long before Stonehenge was being reared on Salisbury Plain, on up to the Normans, the story of Cornwall repeated itself over and over, with no written records to tell us how often, only the patient archeologist to help us guess. One invasion of Britain after another, the conquerors settling on the rich low lands of south and eastern Britain, and those inhabitants not killed in the various ways men have put one another to death these last 20,000 years or so, fled north to the fastness of Scotland, west to wild Wales, or "into the barren and remote peninsula of Cornwall." Thus it is that today in those regions you find the oldest stock in the British Isles, the least influenced by modernity. Cornish folk would have been influenced still less, off in their storm-pummelled coasts, had it not been that long before Rome set foot in Britain, Cornwall's tin, rarest of metals, and copper mines

brought traders from lands too distant to measure in space or time, brought them for thousands of years—until mines far richer and more easily worked were discovered in Australia and in the United States. . . . Instead of walking from his hut in the early morning to the nearby mine shaft, the Cornish miner sailed over the seas—and down a shaft three thousand miles and more from where his Celtic and Iberian forefathers had worked mines for two thousand years and more.

Which brings us to a small detail of a phase of our interest in Cornwall—not that we knew anything about it before we got there. The Prince of Wales' second title is Duke of Cornwall. What, we asked our democratic souls, does that mean? You know a good deal more about the workings of the British Museum than I do if you can find out much to satisfy the curious.

I am willing to admit that in the course of our summer much concerning British royalty came to interest me and it interests my fourteen-year-old daughter exceedingly. The questions she heaped upon me for three months which I could never answer! The Duke of Cornwall matter was one of the early stumpers. I have pored through biographies of the Prince, I have been sent to distant corners where state documents are on file, and still the questions which interest me and my child remain partially unanswered. From what is the revenue of the Royal Family derived? What supervision over it is exerted by Parliament, if any? Pages are given in biographies of the Prince of Wales to his first words, what games he played when he was four, his first visit to Paris . . . but as to who pays for it all and how. . . . One biography of three hundred and twenty pages calls one chapter "As Man of Business"—six pages are given to business. "To have devoted a chapter to this private business man aspect of the Prince may have seemed a trifle unnecessary"—and the alibi for those six pages is that in the United States this aspect of him does not pass unappreciated! Another biography of over two hundred and ninety pages gives two to the Prince's income and that in the vaguest manner.

Is it only a grubby materialistic American who has any interest as to what happens when his first of the month comes 'round? I plead guilty.

Cornwall was created a Duchy for the Black Prince back in the fourteenth century and ever since has been the inheritance of the Prince of Wales and, evidently, one of his main sources of income. In those Black Prince days he could draw on revenue from ten castles, nine parks, fifty-three manors, thirteen boroughs and towns, twenty-nine "hundreds" . . . plus mines and fish, then no doubt as now. Ten years ago, as far as my discouraged searchings can make out, Cornwall brought in His Royal Highness about a million dollars a year, of which, however, the greater part went back into upkeep, improvements, salaries and the like. It seemed to net him the tidy sum of around \$200,000 a year. The documents in the possession of the British Museum bearing on the subject of how His Royal Highness might be paying his bills stop with the year 1921.

Anyhow, as far as I can make out, if you eat a Cornish oyster today, you are helping along Edward P., though Australian tin and American copper have caused some shrinkage in his Cornish funds. However, of late he has been seeing to more modern mining methods in Cornwall and business is looking up. The little matter of the Duchy of Lancaster brings him in more than Cornwall net, though not gross.

Let us return to nature and show the English that we have a Soul.

"There is nothing that affords a more feasible proof both of the Existence and Goodness of God, than the Beauties of the Universe," (says a book on "Rural Elegance Displayed in the Description of Cornwall," with all the "s'es" printed like "f's") "these innumerable, gay appearances, and delightful prospects, which are scattered throughout all the scenes of visible creation. Thunder, lightning, earthquakes, and such like astonishing phenomena of nature, may perhaps terrify us into an apprehension of a superior power; but this is a proof, which works upon us in the most sweet and agreeable, though at the

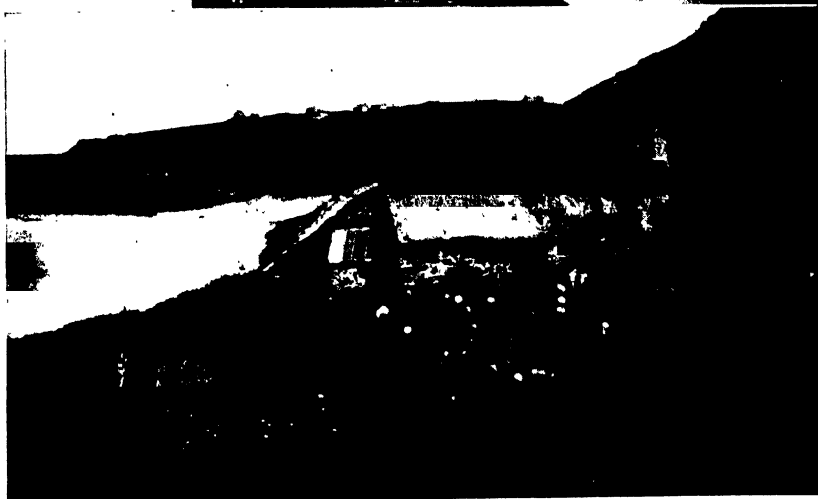
same time, forcible and convincing manner. This gives us the most lovely and amiable view of our Maker." (Thunder, lightning and earthquakes, mind.)

"As the face of Heaven (we told you before) is tintured with a sprightly azure; so that of the earth is overspread with a lively green, a colour, which, of all others, is the most apt to revive the imagination, and excite alacrity of soul. . . . How various are the species of Trees? . . . Among those of larger size, and taller stature, we may reckon the Oak, the Pine, the Elm, and the Beech. . . . What rhetoric can describe the beauty or arithmetic the variety of the several species of Flowers? . . . If we examine the several kinds of animals, we shall find the bodies of them adorned with equal if not superior beauty to what is found in the vegetables. To begin with, Man . . . though it must be allowed that Adam and Eve were the masterpieces of the creation, yet there are still numberless terrestrial animals, which have their peculiar beauties and are the just objects of both our amazement and delight. Witness the War-horse, the Elephant, the Lion, the Stag, the Greyhound. . . . Gavest thou wings and feathers to the Ostrich? says the Lord to Job! . . ."

If a book describing the beauties of Cornwall can give pages to a description of the elephant and ostrich, mayhap I will be pardoned for having dragged in the matter of the income of the Prince of Wales.

The Beauties of the Universe we shall return to are round about Fowey. To let you really appreciate the charm of the place, it would be necessary to draw a map to show how Fowey lies not only on its almost landlocked harbor, but how this estuary runs north for six wooded miles between its sheltered hills with two wooded branches to Lostwithiel, and another wooded short arm juts east across from Fowey. We dumped our belongings in a spotless room over a cobbler's, fed our starved souls and then, instead of returning to the room and reading a bit before bed as we planned, we rented a boat. That was a summer evening to remember, rowing quietly about the estuary, which, except perhaps just at Fowey, seems more like

LAND'S
END



SENNEN
COVE



a river between wooded hills and banks. Not a human being seemed stirring; big boats, little boats, still for the night. "All of a sudden the world changed its nationality again. This time it was more like Norway." (Not that June has ever seen Norway.) "High hills came shooting down to the water, all covered with dense trees and bright little flowers popping here and there. We peeped into an old wreck, which I like to imagine as having belonged to the Spanish Armada. Your imagination runs away with you in a place like that. We came back to the pier when the sun was just sinking back of a beautiful house way up above the glistening town and we wandered back to the room in a different world, the kind of world that imaginative artists would paint in a dreamy mood." (Whatever that may mean.)

Fowey was indeed a place to set your mind a whirling at ten o'clock of a summer evening. Fowey had its great day when it shipped away many a vessel for the Crusades. . . . "The glories of Fowey rose . . . partly by feats of warre, partly by Pyracie, and so waxing rich fell all to Marchaundize." Ah, the "Fowey Gallants," as her swarthy seaman Pirates were called, had the French in many a pet, until their tempers could stand it no longer and over they came and set fire to the town. Look up the steep hill in the dusk and rising over church and houses you will see Place. That is all the name there is to the place—Place. It is the old, battlemented, small castle, behind whose walls the inhabitants rushed to save their skins from scorching—or murder—and put up such a fight of it from there that the French retired without more ado to their boats.

Outlined against the late sunset sky you see a ruin on each side of the narrow harbor mouth. Once those were two stout forts, built back in the reign of Edward IV, and a great chain stretched from one to the other, to guard the harbor. Henry VIII's day saw an awesome fort erected by the townspeople crowning a pile of rocks at the entrance to the harbor. It too is in ruins.

The plans we wove for the next day! Up early, breakfast

in the sun on our balcony overlooking the harbor, into bathing suits, boat already "ired from 'arry for four bob," and the whole day, with a picnic lunch, we were to spend exploring the estuary for miles, swimming, sunning on bits of beaches here and there. . . . A day of days! And the next morning it poured.

Ah me, the time came when we woke to the sound of rain day after day after day, my rebellion turning into resignation, then into the final stage of philosophical ignoring. But Fowey was the first experience of plans dependent on sunshine being drenched into the impossible, and my heart near to cracked. The English can have their weather! Every drop of it! No wonder they have colonized the globe—thousands must have pointed out before this that they were but escaping from the home climate. Wrote Tacitus, "The Heaven is much clouded and sends down frequent showers . . . the wetness which proceeds from Heaven and the earth. . . ." My, but the Romans must have been glad to get back to Italy.

Forlornly we splashed out of Fowey over Truro and Falmouth toward the Lizard. Of course we learned that there are days when a downpour at nine may mean a cloudless sky by noon, but we were too far from Fowey by the time we learned it.

Now and then during the summer we got beguiled off our appointed route by a mere name. Letters strung together on a guide post would catch our fancies and we would announce "Let's go there!" Thus it was with Gweek. We inquired at a filling station if roads to Gweek were motorable. You have no idea the reports current as to Cornish roads. Half the English would have you think it was almost suicide to motor beyond the Tamar. This good Cornish petrol man at once tried to dissuade us—narrow, hilly, crooked, hedged lanes, many char-a-bancs. . . . But Gweek still called. The whole way there we passed a car standing beside the road and one bicycle—and our horn almost worn out for the certainty that around each hedged corner moved destruction toward us. And Gweek was merely

Gweek, where once King Alef in Hereward the Wake spread his wedding feast of "fried pilchards, hake, roasted porpoise and huge squab pies." But on beyond, rolling along a deserted Cornish road, we came upon an ancient gabled grey stone Cornish farm house covered from ground to roof in front with pink roses—and there we learned the meaning of a Cornish tea. I give no details lest I break the heart of some one dieting. Not long after tea we reached Mullion Cove.

If you own sons you owe it to them to take them to Mullion Cove. I had a daughter along who grew positively antagonistic to me when I dragged her off, purely because the tide was coming in and we should be washed to sea or dashed upon the rocks. You can approach the sandy beach of Mullion Cove only via a long cave at low tide.

At Mullion Cove you possess the Cornwall you have dreamed of, towering massive black cliffs, caves, rocky islets, and the clear green sea. Two curved sea walls front the infinitesimal hamlet which dots the shore, all fishermen. Above on the downs stands a hotel. The town of Mullion itself lies a mile inland.

The wrecks that have been dashed about these Cornish rocks! Mullion Cove has had its full quota, if reports can be believed, in the past at least not altogether to the sorrow of the Celtic inhabitants. "When news of a wreck flies round the coast, thousands of people are instantly collected near the fatal spot." (Begin to take the rest with a grain of salt; there can't be a thousand people hereabouts.) "Pick-axes, hatchets, crow-bars and ropes are their usual implements for breaking up and carrying off whatever they can. The moment the vessel touches the shore, she is considered fair plunder, and men, women and children are working on her to break her up night and day. The precipices they descend, the rocks they climb, and the billows they buffet to seize the floating fragments are the most frightful and alarming I ever beheld; the hardships they endure, especially the women in winter, to save all they can, are almost incredible. . . . A few in the neighborhood, it seems,

having a little more light than others, had scruples about visiting a wreck that came ashore on the Lord's Day, lest it should be breaking the Sabbath; but they gathered all their implements into a public house and waited until the clock struck twelve at midnight, and then they rushed forth, all checks of conscience removed."

We had thought to spend the night at the Lizard, but it was too barren and too crowded. We gave the char-a-bancs one horrified look and recoiled to Coverack.

Sleep your second night in Cornwall, if not in Mullion Cove, at Coverack. It is a nest of small houses clutching a hillside which rises from the cove. Our plump, beaming Cornish lady was still a-thrill over the boarders she'd had for weeks that spring, moving picture actors and actresses, who were filming some tale of the sea, shipwreck and all. But they were the nice and pretty things!

I remember I did say I would say nothing more about roads, but it seems only fair to admit that one can drive hours long in Cornwall over the sort of highways that unless one has loutish nerves, at the end of the day some one is going to collect the fragments and deposit what was you in a basket. Not that you had a wreck, but simply went to pieces. Miles on end you drive through very narrow high-hedged lanes, so tortuous that never can you see more than a few feet ahead, nor, because of hedges, can you ever get an idea of what may be coming. I honked that horn until nothing but habit kept any sound left in it, and all we met were two cars at the two odd spots where passing was too simple. There was one hill after another; we seemed never to get out of second gear and were often in first. Nor does Cornwall believe in overdoing signposts. You see more of the country than if you had any idea where you were going, but many's the time we hauled up at signless crossroads to ponder and gaze at maps, and cast eyes over the horizon. "If we're on this road here we should go in that direction, but if this is the road we're on, then we ought to go there." And after some miles June would say to me or I would

say to her, "Doesn't this look familiar to you?" We had been going around in circles. But that southwest corner of Cornwall is worth it all, all. The flowered hamlets tucked away in trees, the church spires on their wooded hills . . . and then we stumbled upon Manacaan.

Maybe the good Lord means I shall return to Cornwall, and if He does I shall make straight (straight in Cornwall!) for Manacaan and the thatch-roofed New Inn. Not that I saw the inside—it may be enough to start the tears, but if so, I should get up early and rush out to the hill across the way and sit there by the hour looking at the outside of the New Inn. Then there is the church, the only Cornish church I paid any attention to. But I paid much attention to that, while June sat inspired with her knitting. It is a very small church on its hill of flowers and trees. The south door is very old Norman, a great fig tree grows out of the wall at the juncture of tower and nave, and no one stirs in any direction. I would rather have that church any day than St. Paul's in London.

We were dashing through Helston in relieved and spirited fashion when we spied a public tennis court in a park. We left our angel Austin in a deserted cattle market and had twenty-five cents worth of good exercise.

This day was an elder son's twenty-second birthday. We celebrated it by having a special tea at Marazion, or "Market Jew," in Mount's Bay, directly overlooking St. Michael's Mount. Who would have guessed,—maybe no one would have guessed but some million people know—there is a small sized Mont St. Michel rising sheer out of the sea off the coast of Cornwall? For centuries it belonged to the Benedictines of Henry Adams' and my Norman Mont, as a gift from Edward the Confessor in the eleventh century. A holy lady saint from Ireland, daughter of a king, is known to have visited some abbey in St. Michael's Mount as early as the fifth century. It is crowned with its present age old abbey, now serving as remodelled dwelling for an English lord. Like the Mont in Normandy, at low tide a causeway connects it with the mainland,

at high tide it is an island. It became an island under our very eyes. Twenty years ago the lord of the Mount was wont to be rowed ashore by feudal oarsmen in gorgeous livery.

Through Penzance, which of course should exist only as appropriate colorful background for pirates and looks anything but piratical, over really very terrible roads through Mousehole, on which roads at times a driver can be unhappy, what with narrow ways perched on cliffs, at one corner the sea dashing on rocks below and not so much as a reassuring string to keep any object on wheels from sliding off. If we had met a vehicle in such a spot I should have said: "Here, take our car, you can have it, spare and all," and some one else could have spent his life wondering what to do about it. I never knew anything like the luck we had in Cornwall; we practically never met anything!

If you remember your Mother Goose, if it is in Mother Goose:

"As I was going to St. Ives—(we went there)
I met a man with seven wives.
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven cats,
Each cat had seven kits.
Kits, cats, sacks and wives
How many were there going to St. Ives?"

If you remember that Cornish rhyme in Cornwall, you will say, *if* you met that man on a typical Cornish road, and you in a car, there would be either forty-nine dead cats or two dead Parkers,—or forty-nine dead cats *and* two dead Parkers.

That night we were to be romantic and stop at Land's End. When we got there it affected us like unto the Lizard—too many trippers, too many cars, too many people selling postcards, and incidentally,—really in this case it was only incidental—the attractive hotel too expensive. You mildly wonder, however, as you turn away from Land's End if there is any place else in the Cornish world where you can sleep. Giant

cliffs, the sea booming and crashing at their base are indeed glorious. We prowled wherever there seemed sufficient footing, but men and seagulls have different if not contrasting ideas of what makes an appropriate spot in which to spend the night.

And what we found was something so perfect that we stayed on—the most ideal combination of sea and sand it has even been my lot to come across—at Sennen Cove on Whitesand Bay. As I dally along with old Cornish guide books written before the age of cars, I notice not one of them mentions the hill one must descend to reach Sennen Cove—1 in 5 gradient, if that means anything to you. It does to me, after getting up that hill again. What matter? At the foot, enclosing the single road of nondescript houses, sloped at the further end the small pier which on many a wild night has launched its gallant life boat; at the other end, our Whitesand Bay Hotel, first built in 1671. Stretching north from that hotel is the curved arm of white sand hills and cliffs behind. Two nights and parts of three glorious days we stayed and bathed off and on all day long, as time allowed. The surf was just battering enough, the sky was cloudless, and—strike down my narrow soul for being so niggardly—there was not a tripper. Indeed there was so much beach and so much water, you were not conscious of even the few souls sprawling happily about. The world was for him who would own it. To beat about in the cool green breakers, to lie on white sand and look at the blue sky, to clamber hour on end over rocks and cliffs, wild flowers at every step, butterflies, birds, peace and quiet and the smell of the sun on our earth. . . . Such a day one remembers as long as one remembers a cathedral—longer than some.

I found a beach which no one else in all the world knew about, and all alone I bathed there, making such noises as I would, acting as Neolithic as I pleased. When that evening I asked our hotel keeper if she knew about that beach, she all but crossed herself, and had she been French and not Celtic she would have said: "*Mon Dieu!*" I hadn't been *bathing there!* No one ever bathed *there* and came out alive. . . . Such

treacherous sands! They sucked the mightiest under. The next day I went back with June and nothing sucked anybody and we made all the noise we wanted to and loved the world.

But I did wake up in the night, both nights at Sennen Cove, in an anguishing ague for sticking with the car half way up that 1 in 5 hill.

Sure enough, when I got our Austin Seven out of its garage, as if my midnight lack of faith had broken its spirit, it refused to go over a little bump two inches high. I opened the hood and looked under—that is what people who own cars do. The only course any woman in this world need pursue to gather a host of King Arthur's knights around her is to open the hood of a car and look under. Any man knows she would never know if the engine had fallen out. The gesture appeals to all that is manly in him and he rushes to the rescue. They, plural, rush to the rescue. Two men hide an Austin Seven from view, five so conceal it that the last two no longer remember what they came for. Everyone rushed for his tools and before my agonized eyes I beheld screw drivers, monkey wrenches, pliers, each busy, each at some part of that car, the owner of each tool informing the owners of all the others: "No, no, not there. I'm sure I've traced what's wrong." Naturally, when a chorus of voices assured me that by unscrewing what each had unscrewed and making certain readjustments I could now drive off without any trouble, the car would not go at all. In the end, though it hurt me to appear in the least ungrateful, I asked if some one would mind 'phoning for a mechanic from the nearest garage (pronounced in England, you must remember, ga'ridge). The nearest garage was eight miles distant. Naturally, that mechanic when he arrived did practically nothing at all—blew into the hood, or shook up something or just breathed heavily, and our precious one shot up that 1 in 5 hill as if the ghosts of all the Cornish Saints were on its tail.

That day we roamed Austinwise the Cornish coast, though now and then we got out on some cliff, and all but "perpetuated ourselves down prejudices," as some one said Mrs. Malaprop

TINTAGEL



CLOVELLY

would say. From Sennen Cove through lovely St. Ives, the fascinating hamlet of Gwithian (if it was Gwithian—often during the summer we would come upon some hamlet in a woody hollow, or around a sudden bend in the road, or crowning a hill, and no sign on village or map to let us know its name). If one should ever grow weary of the old in these isles, there is one of the most attractive, spanking new coast resorts at Perran Porth, the sort of a place a family of young folks would find delightful, the most pleasant type of English people enjoying themselves in all directions, with everything there one ever could want to do in the summer. Some stretches of the road that day were deadly dull. Whereat I call to June: "Look at the map quick and get us off this road!"

Where should we sleep? We must sometime.

Let me break off for a moment to discuss one blessed characteristic of these British Isles which causes the long suffering American soul to give daily thanks to heaven: their ideas of advertising. Not a sign disfigures the landscape except so rarely that one forgets how cruel the effect can be.

In the matter of beds and breakfast, we gradually learned that there was the chance of spending the night in all sorts of quaint nooks if we kept our eyes open from around eight-thirty to nine for a Bed and Breakfast sign hung out in front of some century old house, and shillings cheaper than a hotel; also the chance of a home-cooked breakfast no hotel ever dreamed of. But a Bed and Breakfast sign in true English fashion can be so small that you catch no sight of it driving by.

This particular evening we were out for something different—and found it, not because we saw the over-modest sign, "Bed and Breakfast," but because we were so fascinated with an old stone house set back from the road with great trees about it—and there we parked the car amid the pigs and chickens and spent the night. I don't know where it is, except on the road to Camelford. It is a farm house, but four hundred years ago it belonged to some squire, with its mullioned windows, its paneling, its gables. It is ivy covered, bordered with gay flowers, so

lovely that even I had to try to sketch it that soft summer evening out under the trees. I hereby confess that every night for the matter of more than a month until I made myself stop, I went to sleep thinking of that house, and how I would "fix it." The good farmer's wife, who was in the midst of haying and cooking for all hands and who prepared us such a Sunday morning breakfast as no hotel in all these isles could serve, knew nothing about that rare home of hers. "Folks around here say it's five hundred years old. I don't know. . . ."

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CHAPTER 7

FROM A SUNDAY WITH KING ARTHUR AT TINTAGEL OVER CLOVELLY TO A MONDAY WITH LORNA DOONE ON EXMOOR



THAT Sunday we found our way to the most romantic spot in Cornwall, tracking King Arthur to his lair at Tintagel, "sheer Tintagel, fair with famous days." It is restful, delightful in this harassed world of research to read a book about Arthur and Tintagel written by a person whose mind is troubled by no queries. "There is no doubt that Tintagel was the birth place of King Arthur. All the early historians are unanimous on this point." The only question later historians are unanimous about is doubt as to whether such a person as King Arthur ever was born at all.

I do not know that a sight of Tintagel makes him seem any more certain, any less "distracting and mystifying," except in so far as any wild stretch of Cornish coast churns the imagination into easy activity. Who that has ever tried to be historically honest in the treatment of the past can gaze down those rocks into the sea and not yearn back toward less particular days when a so-called historian felt himself at liberty to weave what words he would about a character? What joy Geoffrey of Monmouth must have had compiling his "History" in the twelfth century, especially when he allowed himself to expand as he would over a character with the possibilities of

an Arthur! By calling his work a "History" he made Arthur an "historical" personage and down the ages long before and after Geoffrey of Monmouth the volume of his deeds and the achievements of his knights has gathered unto itself the hopes and dreams and desires and adventures of many pens of many lands. Before ever we reach Cornwall well may we be aware that all a man with a conscience can allow as probable facts about Arthur is that the chances are he was a late fifth century and early sixth century general of mixed Roman-British blood, who possessed some knowledge still clinging about the island concerning Roman methods of warfare, and who led his Britons against the Picts, Scots and Saxons seeking to lay waste the land. Add that he was probably betrayed by his wife and some near kinsman, and fell in battle—so much for Arthur.

Yet seek those wind-swept bluffs on the promontory of Tintagel—even the tombstones in the church of Tintagel on the mainland must be buttressed against the gales—on a cloudy Sunday morning, turn your back on the pompous castellated hotel across on its mainland heights, on the small slate quarry below in the cove, look north or south or out to sea—and believe anything you want about anybody. If it is your preference let Arthur be that pure king in his castle just behind you on its rocky island cliffs, "wearing the white flower of a blameless life."

"... Who revered his conscience and his God:
Whose glory was redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listened to it:
Who loved one only and who clave to her..."

As for me, give me that nonpareil of the English language, Malory, undiluted. Have you read Malory lately? Oh, read him, read him! And since the world has taken many liberties with Arthur and his knights, I stretch my bit and picture more taking place "in the castle that was called the castle of Tintagel" than "history" allows. If I am at Tintagel let all else be there—the dolorous strokes, the wonderly wraths, the smittings

passingly sore, the swangings out of swords, the swapping off of heads, the swoonings of male and female, the weddings with great noblesse. (How bloodless seems our modern tongue after Malory!) Let it be at Tintagel that Garnish beholds his untrue lady "so lying," when "for pure sorrow his mouth and nose burst out in bleeding, and with his sword he smote off both their heads, and then he made sorrow out of measure. . . ." How pale our twentieth century handling of such matters! Nor did Garnish stop with "out of measure" sorrowing, but "therewith suddenly he rove himself on his own sword unto the hilts."

We shall have Sir Peris de Forest Savage at Tintagel because I like his name.

And we shall allow Arthur, for indeed he could "lay on with a sword, and did marvelous deeds of arms that many of the knights had great joy of his deeds and hardiness. . . ." We want Excalibur on Tintagel, that sword which "gave light like thirty torches . . . therewith he slew much people." Let it be at Tintagel knights "hurtled together and all to brast their spears, and then they pulled out their swords and hewed on helms and hauberks."

I am not so eager about having Galahad, "the most man of worship of the world," at Tintagel. Galahad was no part of the early Arthurian legends. He was insisted upon by later clergy as vindication for the celibate life. Gawain of no over-squeamish parts when it came to ladies; Gawain, who with Galatine, his good sword, might smite a rival through thick hauberk and "make him a wound that men might see both liver and lung," had for centuries been considered fit to gain the Grail, until there came a day when it was deemed well to show the world that only he who "never felt the kiss of love nor maiden's hand in his," could be the Knight of Knights.

But to my windswept heart, Tintagel means one knight above King Arthur and all others, he of that "first really great story of passionate, romantic love in modern literature"—Tristan. Two Tristans indeed, and both belong in Tintagel without my doing any forced importing of my own—Malory's

Tristan and Wagner's. The swashbuckler that Malory's can be: "he was called bigger than Sir Lancelot, but Sir Lancelot was better breathed." But Tristan was breathed enough for adventure and to spare—severed heads all but clogged his way through Cornwall, and lands beyond. Who since Malory has ever started La Beale Isoud and Tristan and their love potion with quite such right words: "... and they thought never drink that ever they drank to other was so sweet, nor so good. But by that their drink was in their bodies, they loved either other so well that never their love departed for weal neither for woe... the which love never departed the days of their life." Ah, but it almost did for Tristan, for Malory's knight forgets his Beale Isoud long enough to marry the Breton Isoud of the White Hands, and then—remembers.

But so beautiful was La Beale Irish Isoud that when Tristan was bringing her back to Tintagel somewhat circuitously, for King Mark to marry, she saved her own head in open and agreed competition with the fair lady of Sir Breunor. If Sir Breunor's lady had been lovelier that knight would have swapped off the head of La Beale Isoud, who however was so fair that Sir Breunor, full knowing the consequences, had to admit "fairer saw I never in all my live days." Whereat Tristan drew his sword and "with an awk stroke he smote off (the other lady's head) clene." "Well, knight," said Sir Breunor, "now hast thou done me a respite." Those were the days!

But King Mark and La Beale Isoud were anon "richly wedded with great noblesse," and anon Mark and Tristan had their difficulties. Once King Mark fled and Sir Tristan "followed him and smote upon him five or six strokes flatling on the neck, that he made him to fall upon the nose." At last it seemed the better part of valor that Tristan "got him shipping" to Brittany. Long years is he away, but the strength of mediæval love potions outlasts time and space. He returns to Cornwall, to Tintagel. La Beale Isoud looks upon him and swoons for very bliss, "and to tell the joys that were betwixt La Beale Isoud and Sir Tristan there is no tongue can tell it, nor heart

think it, nor pen write it. . . ." But Malory who knew enough about love to write that flower of a chapter "How True love is likened to Summer" could perhaps guess. . . .

It is Wagner's Tristan I see now. From this Tintagel he sailed to Ireland to bring back Isolde for his king—and I close my eyes but a moment and there from the north comes the great galley with the awning of gorgeous orange red Vienna drapes over the lovers in that magic opera house. Near here they land, King Mark goes aboard . . . and it is on this island, Tintagel, that Tristan and Isolde sing their love till dawn, when Mark and the treacherous Melot confront them with their sin. (But here Vienna . . . Berlin . . . New York have me uneasy. Tristan and Isolde sang their love always in a tree-shrouded bower—and no tree ever grew on Tintagel. Winds in the days of legend were as fierce as now. . . . But love could sing through a treeless Cornish night.) It is to Brittany Tristan flees after his mortal wound from Melot, and it is in Brittany the most glorious music of this world gets sung, when Isolde finds her dying lover . . . on a coast near a castle such as Tintagel.

"... for there was never worshipful man nor worshipful woman but they loved one better than another."

"All down the thundering shores of Bude and Boss
There came a day as still as heaven . . ."

and we rode on to Boscastle. Boscastle is a town I shall some day unpack and stay in, for it is to my memory the loveliest village in Cornwall. It is hilly, wild, romantic, "entirely unconventional," not as to morals, but as to paths and roads and cottages and bridges. There are trees, ravines, streams, rocks, cliffs. No one could ever imagine the "port" of Boscastle who had not seen it, least of all a sailor. The opening is through a narrow double bend of rocks into a narrow, crooked ravine, nothing more nor less. Vessels are warped in by immense hawsers, if your land lubbery soul can get that. There is a fascinating looking hotel down in the valley—the Wellington, I think it is, with feudal and castellated towers. And there is

a famous church in an almost inaccessible spot, as church sites go, since the good Lord has ever had to count on a few lost souls straying in either by mistake or because it was convenient. Not the church of Forrabury—you can go out in one direction and not have far to walk to fall off a cliff. But the fame of the church lies in its tower and the fame of the tower lies in its bells, and the fame of the bells lies in the fact that there are none. As they were nearing Boscastle in a ship, the pilot exclaimed "Thank God we made the shore with evening's tide!" But the captain was not for thanking God.

"Thank God, thou whining knave, on land,
But thank, at sea, the steersman's hand. . . ."

You can imagine the rest, and how the reverend pilot was the sole survivor. Those bells peal down off the Cornish coast,

"Come to thy God at last!"

CLOVELLY—all the world knows about Clovelly, alas for Clovelly. When I was thirteen, I had three pictures of Clovelly on my California wall; thirty years and one did I have to wait to see it. After all, thirteen is *the* age for Clovelly. June hadn't a disappointment. "You can talk all you want about its quaintness, but it will always be more, much more attractive and quaint than you expected it to be. Clovelly is *so* different from anything you expected it to be like. It is just too perfect." It is that, if you can wait for the rain to stop and the trippers past counting to depart. Walk in the early evening along the coast and cliffs through those glorious woods the five miles or so to "Gallantry Bower," then back to Clovelly too late for anyone but a native or so to be about. Dusk, lights beginning to appear in leaded windows, that one hill street of Clovelly stretching down to the sea, so steep that only little donkeys can manage it, is one of the rare fairybook sights of Europe. It is that, too, early the next morning before the little village clutching to its steep hillside is stirring . . . and then pack up quickly and be gone before the first char-a-banc arrives.

DOONE VALLEY, EXMOOR



PORLOCK

We did away with Ilfracombe; it sounded too touristy, so cut across to Lynton and Lynmouth through Devon roads my diary dares tell the rapturous truth about. There is a deep-wooded canyon approaching Lynmouth along by Watersmeet no one should miss driving or walking through. Out of Lynmouth is one of the most famous hills in all England, 1 in $4\frac{1}{4}$ gradient, a rise of five hundred feet in three-quarters of a mile and thus steeper than Sennen Cove. Austin, don't fail us! Ach, what a hill. Luck lets us by a handsomer car than ours, stalled a third of the way up. I know how the pit of June's stomach feels; she knows the state of mine. Good little Austin, play the game like an English sport! Up . . . up . . . anyway we have gas enough . . . up . . . up . . . and oil . . . "Look at the view!" . . . "Wait till we get to the top!" There! and not a hitch or quiver. I want to feed the Austin a cracker and pat it and say "good dog!"

Over the top of that hill and down to the left is a land we have been waiting for, and there we spend one of the most perfect afternoons of the summer. It is Exmoor of Lorna Doone. "We left the road for Oare very soon, where we looked at the darling little bit of a church where Lorna Doone was married to John Ridd. Thank God for Blackmore and his 'Lorna Doone.'" And thank God, says mother, for Exmoor.

Are there children nowadays who fail to read Lorna Doone? It can't be. June re-read most of it after our summer afternoon, knitting entirely forgotten. Pick the book up at eighty, I do believe, and begin . . . "If anybody cares to read a simple tale told simply, I, John Ridd, of the parish of Oare, in the county of Somerset, yeoman and church warden, have seen and had a share in some doings of this neighbourhood. . . ."—and sixty-eight years will fall away with a snap of the fingers, and the old Doone thrill is in the heart.

There we were, standing alone in the still small church of Oare. . . . "Lorna's dress was of pure white, clouded with faint lavender. . . . I was afraid to look at her. It is impossible for any, who have not loved as I have, to conceive my joy and

pride. . . Her eyes, which none on earth may ever equal. . . The sound of a shot rang through the church, and those eyes were dim with death." Through the white lilacs, John Ridd goes forth for his revenge. ("Time to go to bed now, my dear. You can go on with your book tomorrow. It's half past eight!"—as if you heard a word.) "... Carver Doone, with a vile oath, thrust spurs into his flagging horse, and laid one hand on a pistol-stock. . . ." (He *can't* kill John Ridd—the book is written in the first person!) "... Carver Doone turned the corner suddenly, on the black and bottomless bog. . . ." ("Mother, I think you'd better speak to the child again about bed—she doesn't seem to be minding very well.") "... and wheeling, fired, and then rode at me and his bullet struck me somewhere. . . ." ("My dear, your father is going to speak to you next time if you don't get to bed this minute!"—"Oh mother, there are only eleven pages more to the book—pleeeeeease!")

If ever we had a selfish feeling about a place it was Exmoor—that we were going to prowl by ourselves and Lorna Doone. What was our horror to find at the Lorna Doone farm where we were to park the car a yard filled with char-a-bancs. Our spirits were broken. On Exmoor we would not go and be jostled by trippers. So what we did was to sit in the car and read until the char-a-bancs saw fit to depart. It lost us precious time but it was the lesser agony. The last babbling tripper seated and off and the yard deserted, we bolted through the gate and up the valley along that stream John Ridd, turned fourteen years, waded, when "all the turn of his life" hung upon the decision to do just that. For Bagworthy water issues from Doone Valley—and it was that day a small girl asked him " 'What is your name?' 'My name is John Ridd. What is your name?' 'Lorna Doone,' she answered, in a low voice, as if afraid of it. . . ."

It was a perfect afternoon, warm, sunny, that we followed Bagworthy water up as lovely a valley as man's eyes would ever want to see. "The country got wilder and wilder as we

went along and all the way the loveliest little stream just filled to the top with trout, which almost caused Mom's end." It was not that full of trout, but it doesn't need that many "almost to cause Mom's end." I tell myself I shall not be old until I can creep up to water and spy a trout—just one trout is enough, heading up stream, gills moving, now and then a quick flip of the tail—and not suffer with mixed ecstasy and agony. The first because the sight of a trout does that to me, the second because I haven't a rod in my hands.

"We were without maps, and since there were no signs whatever, we tried to call back to memory the location of Doone Valley . . . which branched off from Bagworthy water somewhere on the right. That was our recollection of the map, but we were sadly bemuddled. When we discovered their (sic) were five or six valleys branching off where we wanted one, we walked a mile up one valley, but although it was lovely and very wild, we found no ruins of huts, or any signs of destroyed civilization. We walked back to Bagworthy . . . and walked up another valley, which we found later was the right one. There were no trees, and nothing but short grass and heather. We did not find the ruined huts, but since it was getting too late, we walked back to the car."

Perhaps one must first tramp over an English moor to realize what it does to the spirit. I have roamed high bare open spaces in other parts of the world and been somewhat depressed by them. Not in England! There is a texture to the English moor, shadings, contours. . . . The eyes can see so far, and all they see is soothing, satisfying. . . . Soon the spirit is as boundless as the downs and moors, which are, from where you stand, limitless. On Exmoor one is ten, twelve with John Ridd and Lorna, one is ten thousand with the weathered stones, the dales, the curves toward the sky. It is John Ridd who says:

"And I for my part can never conceive how people who live in towns and cities, where neither birds are . . . nor meadow grass, nor even so much as a stick to cut . . . how these poor folk get through their lives, without being utterly weary of

them, and dying for pure indolence, is a thing God only knows, if His mercy allows Him to think of it!"

Indeed on Exmoor, lost up a valley with its bit of a stream trickling down to Bagworthy water . . . furze, butterflies, flowers, lichened rocks, and the blue sky from one end of the world to the other. . . . How *do* we get through our lives in cities? God does not allow Himself to think of it, be sure.

It was after six when we left Doone Valley, the sun at our backs, and drove those strange and winding and hilly roads to Porlock. Riding home from Porlock had meant death to John Ridd's father, not because of the roads, which would mean nothing to men on horseback, but because of waiting Doones. Porlock is a rewarding type of English village, irregular as a maze, from every confusing corner at least one house to catch the breath over, thatched, low, gabled, vine-covered. The miles and hours after Porlock, riding toward Glastonbury, are a mellow delight in memory: late afternoon sunset, early evening, ever so slight a haze with oaks and hedges lifting soft as velvet. . . . The road stretched for miles along a saddle, off to either side, the Somerset world bathed in the fanciful light of a great pale yellow summer moon. That night we slept in a centuries' old priory, now a farm house; I in a great four poster, sunk away from the machine age in a "feather bed." The next morning we drove on to Glastonbury in the rain.

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CHAPTER 8

WE HELP RESTORE GLASTONBURY THE BEAUTIFUL, BATHE IN BATH, AND LOSE OUR HEARTS TO THE COTSWOLDS. WE EXPLORE COMPTON WYNYATES, THE MANOR HOUSE OF ENGLAND, AND ANOTHER ROMAN VILLA



GLASTONBURY, Isle of Avalon, "Happy Island of the Blest!" It is a long cry back to that legendary Celtic paradise between the age of Stonehenge and Roman roads and law. It was still the "Isle of Avalon," isolated from the surrounding country by a sea now five miles distant, in those first century days when Joseph of Arimathea made his mythical first century conversion of England, bringing with him the Holy Grail of Our Lord's Last Supper, and built his little wattle church in Glastonbury. Whether that Joseph in the flesh was the first saint of Glastonbury, whether St. George himself, patron saint of England, one of those "whose names are justly revered by men but whose acts are known only to God," belonged to early fourth century Glastonbury (they claim him), at any rate it is known good St. Patrick spent his last years as first abbot of the struggling little monastery back in the fifth century. There are those to claim, but not loud enough for an Irishman to hear, that his bones lie buried in Glastonbury. The fifth century St. Bridget, the pure, the famed, spent pious time and perhaps founded a nunnery nearby in

Beckery at the foot of Weary-all Hill. . . . Arthur, our King Arthur . . . tales of him and his lady Queen drift through and around Glastonbury arches. Prosaic souls claim Arthur was buried in Glastonbury, but we know better. His grave has never been found, which means he is surely coming again to save the world.

The great authentic saint of Glastonbury is Dunstan, once monk, later Archbishop of Canterbury and the equivalent of Prime Minister under two tenth century Saxon kings whose bones lie buried in the abbey—Dunstan of the forge, Dunstan the bell and clock maker, Dunstan the writer, the painter, the politician, the courtier . . . and abbot of the then greatest monastery of the realm, here at Glastonbury. God had been little pleased with Glastonbury before Dunstan's Benedictine hand took hold and reformed, for a time, the worldly ways of men who thought little on the needs of heaven. The wealth of Glastonbury!—"If the abbot of Glaston might wed the abbess of Shaston (Shaftesbury) their heir would have more land than the King of England."

Saxon abbots give way to Norman . . . along comes our Henry of Blois, of Winchester good works, as one of them. A great fire leaves Glastonbury in ashes . . . one hundred and twenty years go to rebuilding the work of ten centuries, and then indeed is Glastonbury the largest, the most magnificent monastery in England—and yet ever more building added to building! Kings, queens, nobility of this and other lands, visit Glastonbury, bequeath it lands and goods, silver, gold, precious jewels, rare manuscripts. . . . Henry VIII is King of England. Glastonbury was the first monastery in England; it is the last to fall. Whiting, last abbot of a doomed monastery, refuses to surrender. The agent of the king writes: "It is a house meet for the King's Majesty, and no one else." Later the commissioner reports: "We have daily found and tried out both money and plate hid and buried up in walls, vaults and other secret places. . . . At our first entry into treasure-house and vestry also, we neither found jewels, plate nor ornaments sufficient to

serve a poor parish church, whereof we could not a little marvel. After a diligent search in every corner of the monastery they at length found all the plate and ornaments of the church and another sum of money . . . and felt certain there was more. . . . The house was great goodly and princely, such as they had never seen the like, with four parks adjoining . . . a great mere five miles in compass, well replenished with pike, bream, perch and roach, and four fair manor houses. . . . The abbot has much pasture lands in his hands. . . ." And one further bit of correspondence: "Since my last letter to your lordship the late Abbot of Glastonbury went from Wells to Glastonbury and there was drawn through the town upon a hurdle to the hill called the Torre, where he was put to execution. . . ."

Today—"It was *wonderful*," wrote June. "The way in which a lone high Gothic arch stuck way up into the sky with nothing around was terribly impressive." The long Abbey Church skeletoned against the drizzly clouds, what must have been the small glory of the chapel of St. Mary, and still is a glory, on the spot where stood Joseph of Arimathea's little first century wattle church, ruins of monastic buildings, the abbot's kitchen, largest of three necessary to supply the monastery and its stream of guests. Nor is there a stone left of the great Hall where once the abbot entertained the pilgrims to this holiest of abbeys. . . . Trees . . . green lawns. . . . "It did your heart good to see the grand excavation work they were doing. If ever anything deserved it, it was Glastonbury." So much did the sight of that actual careful digging mean to the daughter, she asked for her week's allowance then and there that she might deposit it in a box for donations toward further work. We have a hand in Glastonbury!

Through Wells with its cathedral, one of England's greatest, yet somehow Glastonbury in ruins had gone deeper than Wells whole. June's rhapsodies on Wells: "A rather dull and bleak town, famous for a church which I didn't like. I don't know why I didn't, but I *know* I didn't."

I insert this unadmirable bit deliberately, to show what mood and weather can sometimes mean to the tourist. Wells seen on Monday might have meant agreement with the statement: "the best example to be found in the whole world of a secular church with its subordinate buildings." Wells seen on Tuesday: "I don't know why I didn't like it but I *know* I didn't." Wells on Wednesday might have been: "one of the most beautiful of English cathedrals."

On to Bath, where we bathed. We had planned to sink no end of money in the most complicated bath we could buy in Bath, but that kind, it seems, leaves you scarcely able to stagger for hours. The person in authority was horrified when she learned we planned to drive right off as soon as we were dry, as it were, and would not hear of such irregularities. So we swam in some agreeable soup and claimed we felt different from the way we had ever felt in our lives, and with a long look at the Roman baths and an attempt to picture Bath as it must have appeared in the gay regulated eighteenth century heyday of "Beau Nash" in his great white hat and gold braidings and coach and six, we took ourselves off in our Austin Seven. Even Parkers appear stylish enough for a 1930 Bath.

The clocks were striking seven and we set on driving the miles to Burford before we stopped that night. "Oh the perfect glorious evening drive," wrote I, "and our car going so grand-like, and we off on white Michelin roads and getting lost over and over and over again, and the moon of moons, and bunnies scurrying across the road. One wee one was so terrified and unable to make up its agonized mind which side of the road to run to—always just about to decide so that it kept seeming unnecessary to stop the car. Had I known how long it would take his poor little agonized heart. . . . I ached for miles over his fright. At last, at last, about ten and just getting dark—Burford! Down the broad hilly main street and up it again, my heart melting, I loved it so. . . . We decided on 'The Highway,' five hundred years old, with the gayest of back gardens



THE HIGHWAY INN, BURFORD



COMPTON, WYNYATES

and our gabled room with an ancient beam coming right down the middle of it."

It is dangerous to be dogmatic about localized loveliness in the British Isles. I could not tell myself which *the* loveliest region is, with so much loveliness in all. The English themselves seem to have settled an otherwise impossible question by each claiming the county he lives in. which means as a rule where also he was born, is supreme.

"God gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Beloved over all . . ."

And for Kipling—

" . . . Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!"

Yet no one motoring, bicycling or walking through England should miss the Cotswolds. The names alone set your feet tapping to be off—Stow-on-the-Wold, Moreton-in-the-Marsh, Bourton-on-the-Water, Chipping Norton, Chipping Campden, Weston-Subedge, Shipton-on-Stour, Broad Campden. . . . Burford is to my notion the quaintest town of them all, so that I should want to make it my headquarters, and then explore for days on end. The architecture is different from any other region we saw—small all-stone houses, lacking in some towns and villages the color needed for the highest effect since gardens are all at the back, leaving stone fronts unsoftened to the street. But what stone fronts! (And what gardens when you get a peek at them!) Burford itself should never be hurried through—house after house, each with its gay colored curtains showing through leaded glass windows is achingly lovely, and to be gazed upon lingeringly, every detail marked.

The Cotswold towns and villages have all more or less the same type of house, except that now and then some are set cozily in gardens, instead of standing severely, warding the street off their bright flowers. Gables, mullioned windows, soft grey to grey-tan stone, all stand low and homely-looking. Add the miles between villages, the rolling country, the trees—don't miss the Cotswolds! Yet for all that they possess a certain Cotswold sameness, each town has a decided individuality of its own. You want to be taking pictures as fast as you can turn the film—and then the pictures, as all English pictures, break your heart, they fall so far short of what your fascinated and grateful eyes beheld.

The high light of those all too short days was, again, a manor house—Compton Wynyates in Warwickshire. It was not as large as Penshurst, it covered considerably less ground, but to us it was the most appealing manor house we saw all summer.

For one thing, it is an adventure to find the place, so tucked away is it in those lovely wooded hills. In the days of its building, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, it was far more inaccessible than now. In fact you can still see a stone spire, Compton Pike, on the hill which dates as late as Cavalier days. Roads then were mere tracks across the fields, and there was need of an exposed lantern or flaming fagot on the pike to guide travelers to what was often called "Compton-in-the-Hole." Yet it is built as if the world were expected to pass by daily and behold. No, wrong. It was built by an English family to please its own unfailing good taste.

There is probably nothing left of the early great hall and its two smaller rooms. What greets the eyes today is "one of the most beautiful of all houses that owe their origin and completion to Tudor days." It speaks a proud peace and assurance, one of the first non-castellated manor houses in England. Yet indeed it has known days of anxiety,—earlier two moats protected these Compton possessions, with two sturdy drawbridges to cross. Today English lawns stretch unbroken to the house.

The Compton who built the present Compton Wynyates was a close friend of Henry VIII, so close indeed that anon he was given license to keep his hat on in the king's presence. Not that being close to kings was something one always lived to boast about. Among the generous gestures such as kings can make in the direction of favored courtiers, Henry gave Edmund Compton a certain ruined castle near Warwick, that the materials left might be used to add to Wynyates. Over came softened bricks, roofs, mullioned windows, and some say the handsome twisted brick chimneys adorning the great manor house. When all was done, eighty bed rooms in order, one hundred and seventy-six doors dusted, silver, pewter, copper polished, draw-bridges were let down in a blaze of glory to receive none other than His Majesty the Wife-killer. Only at the time of his first visit he is supposed to have been accompanied by her Catholic Majesty Queen Catherine of Aragon, still both wedded and alive. (More than two hundred years later, when the Compton family were in straitened circumstances King Henry's gilt bed was sold for £10 at auction.)

Almost twenty years before her "progress" to Cowdray, Elizabeth in person visited Wynyates—and we know how such matters were handled. Indeed, no one deserved Compton hospitality more than Her Majesty. For William Compton, great grandson of Henry VIII's favorite, fell in love with the richest heiress in England, one Miss Spencer, whose father would have none of him. Lord Compton bribes the baker, himself takes in the morning loaves, and brings back his lady love in the basket, receiving on the way out a six-penny tip from father, who never looks hard at bakers, for being so early—"That's the way to thrive, my boy!" That was the way Lord Compton got his bride, and father close to convulsions for anger. Disinheritance promptly followed. . . . Enter the Queen. She invites father, then Lord Mayor of London, to stand sponsor with her at the christening of a child of much interest to her. The Lord Mayor is indeed touched. He not only consents, but promises to adopt the child, who is christened Spencer. Enter mother and father

of child—our Comptons. Complete reconciliation and when father dies in 1610 Lord Compton is heir to the tune of £300,000—which to those days was a sum beyond all reckoning. Lord Compton promptly went out of his mind.

He recovered, and then had a relapse, and it is said the cause of the relapse may have been certain letters from his wife. One gives such a vivid glimpse of a 17th century lady's idea of making both ends meet it is worth quoting:

“My sweet life,

“Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your estate, I suppose that it were best for me to bethink or consider with myself what allowance were meetest for me. For considering what care I have had of your estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those which by the laws of God, of nature, and of civil polity, wit, religion, government and honesty, you my dear are bound to, I pray and beseech you to grant me £600 per annum quarterly to be paid. Also I would (besides that allowance for my apparel) have £600 added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable works; and those things I would not, neither will be accountable for. Also I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow, none lend but I, none borrow but you. Also I would have two gentlewomen lest one should be sick or have some other let, also believe that it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their lord and lady with a good estate. Also when I ride a hunting or hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending, so for either of the said women I must and will have for either of them a horse. Also I will have six or eight gentlemen, and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet to myself with four very fair horses, and a coach for my women, lined with sweet cloth, one laced with gold, the other with scarlet and laced with watchet lace and silver with four good horses. Also I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women. Also at any time when I travel I will be allowed not only carroaches and spare horses for me and my women, but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all orderly not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs

with chambermaids, nor theirs with washmaids. Also for laundresses when I travel I will have them sent away before the carriages to see all safe, and the chambermaids I will have go before with the greens (rushes) that the chambers may be ready, sweet and clean. Also for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse to attend me either in city or in country and I must have two footmen and my desire is that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself besides my yearly allowance I would have twenty gowns of apparel, six of them excellent good ones. Also I would have £6000 to buy me jewels, and £4000 to buy me a pearl chain.

"Now seeing I am so reasonable with you I pray you to find my children apparel and their schooling, and also my servants (men and women) their wages. Also I will have my houses furnished and all my lodging chambers to be suited with all such furniture as is fit, as beds, stools, chairs, suitable cushions, carpets, silver warming pans, cupboards of plate, fine hangings and such like; so for my drawing chambers in all houses I will have them delicately furnished, both with hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chair cushions, and all things thereunto belonging. Also my desire is that you pay all my debts, build Ashby House, and purchase lands, and lend no money (as you love God) to the Lord Chamberlain, who would have all, perhaps your life from you. You know him; God keep me and you from such as he is.

"So now I have declared to you what I would have, and what that is that I would not have, I pray that when you be an Earl to allow me £1000 more than I now desire, and double attendance.

"Your loving wife,

"Eliza Compton."

James I spent the night at Wynyates in 1617. The second Earl of Northampton was a staunch royalist, leaving his peaceful manor house to fight for Charles I—to fight and be killed. The next year Compton Wynyates was besieged by Parliamentarians and captured, along with 120 prisoners, £5000 in money, 80 horses, 400 sheep, 160 head of cattle and 18 loads of plunder,

besides six earthen pots of money which had been hidden in the fish pond. It is claimed that only bad Parliamentary marksmanship kept Compton Wynyates from being destroyed by their cannon—the church fell instead.

Up hill and down dale we had driven over bewildering and fascinating and deserted country roads until down in the hollow, wooded grassy hills for background, we spied the beautiful irregular brick and timber mansion. There were never bricks with a softer texture, never a jumbled building which presented a more utterly satisfying whole. Finding we had an hour to wait before the great wrought-iron gates leading down the tree-lined avenue would be opened, and we hungry and no place to eat for miles on end, we bethought us of some emergency chocolate and stale birthday cake in the car, and sat on the roadside under trees munching what fate allowed. No human being passed.

To June, Compton Wynyates was "the most beautiful house I have ever seen. It was mostly a soft brick with big beams visible once in a while, and where there was no ivy, beautiful large leaded windows fitted in. It was enormous, but very rambly, with little bay windows and ins and outs. The inside court was too lovely for anything, the same leaded windows with lovely sculptured grey stone arches on the windows and doorways. Every single room was just too beautiful. Every one had beautiful panelling and ceilings and lovely old family paintings, going back to the sixteenth century, covered the walls. But then to think that all these wonderful rooms are lived in right now by a man whose family goes back for centuries, is the grandest thing of all." There speaks the anchorless young American in her.

Not so many years ago Compton Wynyates would have made a very different impression on a girl. Back in 1774 the entire contents of that rare house were sold to help meet the debts of the then Lord Northampton given to gambling and expensive politics. Worse, when he departed to spend the rest of his days in Switzerland he left orders that the house was to

be torn down, since he could not afford to keep it "up" (literally). What gratitude the family, and every fortunate soul ever to lay eyes on the place, now feels to that retainer who deliberately disobeyed orders—indeed who out of his own funds did what he could to keep the house intact. At that, for years on end it was in a woeful state of neglect and disrepair. In 1884 the fifth Marquess of Northampton was given Compton Wynyates as a wedding present from his father and it was restored to liveableness. The sixth Marquess installed heating and electric lights and has used much taste in furnishings, besides being generous enough to let the public share one of the truly rare homes of England when he is not "in residence."

WE had tea that day in Chipping Campden, which is a Cotswold village not to be missed. If you would realize in one flash the different setting for industry in the seventeenth century, say, and today, wander the one long wide curved street of Chipping Campden, for the most part small, fourteenth to eighteenth century stone houses flush with the roadway, mulioned windows, grey slate roofs, courtly gables, varied doorways. The Town Hall stands on an "island" in the middle of the street, as does the old Market Hall with its open archways. Church, gabled almshouses, trees, sheltered gardens . . . just so appeared Chipping Campden in the days when it was the second most important center of the very important Cotswold wool trade, and at that time wool was "the flower and strength and revenue and blood of England."

It was in the heyday of wool that a sober historian could write of his pre-Roman forbears: "The poor Britains did not at that time understand the excellence of their Wooll, the best cloathing which the God of Nature has bestowed upon the world; this was given us as a Protection from shame, which the Impurity of our corrupted State would expose us to. . . ."

We had tea in a fascinating corner where Cotswold weavers, educated women today, turn out lovely stuff on hand looms.

From Northleach with its church and the roses around its church we found our round-about way along roads where, as all day, we had the world entirely to ourselves, to Chedworth's Roman Villa, one of the four finest in England, "where some old Roman thought good times had come and settled down to be a country gentleman." It was more impressive than Bignor even, because for one thing, instead of having been unearthed from an open ploughed field, it had been reclaimed from a dense forest, and still on three sides is dense forest; and again there was much more of Chedworth to be seen. We were allowed to prowl alone to our heart's content in the quiet late afternoon—mosaic floors, ruins of hypocausts, walls with foundations of pillars still in place, baths . . . and all of this yesterday merely stones which roots of trees in their cool dark underground searchings considered in their way.

One village after another, one stretch of Cotswold road over hill and valley after another. We were winding homeward to Burford along now this white road, getting lost on that, and making discoveries of manor houses, and a castle and bridges and having fun—when what do we do in a deserted stretch but run dead and dry out of gas. We pushed the car as far as we could make it budge, thinking we might reach the top of an incline and coast toward some village and "petrol." Small the car, valiant our grunting efforts—to no far reaching avail. In the distance we saw a small steeple and to that wee village June walked, bringing back a half gallon of rescue in a can nearly as big as herself.

OF course you love Broadway, but it has something of a touristed air to it. You can't feel for a moment you are discovering anything for yourself. Still nothing can really spoil a sixteenth century Cotswold stone house, and Broadway is full of perfect ones. Off the broad main street we did find a house of our own. "I would rather have had it than any other in the world," wrote June. "It was a rambly Tudor house covered with



ROMAN VILLA, CHEDWORTH



CHIPPING CAMPDEN

ivy, my darling leaded windows all around. It was the most peaceful and dignified house and you were certain that anyone living in that house would justify it by lovely furniture." And in my last letter to her I enclosed a picture from the back page of real estate advertisements in the *London Times*. That house on whose stone fence we leaned and which we so loved—June's diary says nothing of the garden and its trees, and there was never lovelier—that house is "for immediate re-sale owing to unforeseen circumstances." I cannot bear to think of the agony having to part with such a house must mean. "Old manor house, originally built in the reign of Henry VII and enlarged in Jacobean times . . . etc., etc. . . . in all about 4½ acres. . . ." My heart aches!

CHAPTER 9

FROM STRATFORD, TOO WELL KNOWN, OVER HIGH MACCLES-
FIELD FOREST WITHOUT A TREE TO CHESHIRE DISCOVERIES
OF OUR OWN



STRATFORD-ON-AVON. Some one has said Stratford today comes nearest Canterbury in the days of the Becket pilgrims. Were there fifteenth century Canterbury pilgrims to wish secretly they could have seen the place before ever the news about Becket's murder got abroad? I cannot help it, but the sight of my countrymen in numbers ruins the atmosphere of any spot I would gaze upon, unless it is the United States itself. Their talk, their voices, their noisy straining to rush every place, or their bored bewilderment, and the way every last female young person looks and dresses exactly like every other female young person. . . . But at bottom really it is their voices. I don't suppose I ever felt unhappy over a countryman abroad whose voice was pleasant.

Of course Americans were everywhere in Stratford. Most of the world not at home seemed to be in Stratford. We planned to bear on from Stratford as soon as we had some supper. As we drove out of town we noticed every American seemed to be going in one certain direction. "Are we missing anything?" Back we turned the car, glued our eyes on three elderly American women and trailed them in low. Where they turned and

entered, we turned and entered, indeed we did. For that night the Shakespeare Players were giving "Romeo and Juliet." Ah, one mustn't be too scornful of Americans. We almost missed that play! It was splendidly acted, though one must of course agree with at least half of June's conclusions: "My two thoughts as we left the theatre were, that I liked Juliet tremendously, and that God be blessed that men today did not run around making love the way Romeo did."

Eleven o'clock at night and no idea on earth where we were to lay our heads. We sought beds in hotel after hotel—all full. But there is always some corner somebody can put you in and we at last found ours.

We are fine ones to talk disparagingly of Americans rushing about. The next day we drove 135 miles, besides sights in between to do for a week at least, and for a lifetime to think back upon and absorb. I quote June's diary from pure laziness. If I try to describe places and scenes not only do I bore myself miserable but my adjectives, considering my age and supposed education, are pathetically limited. If hers are no better she has the excuse of tender years and behind that alibi I comfortably hide my own inadequacies.

"We left Stratford the next morning for Warwick. Imagine going over a drawbridge to get into your own home—a home with two big tourets (sic) surrounded by high walls, and with the Avon many feet below, winding in and out of your grounds. But the inside of the house was the most wonderful. First we went through a narrow hall covered with black armor with bullet marks still visible; then came a series of gorgeous rooms, all looking over the river and each with the most beautiful gilt furniture I could imagine. Each room was done with the utmost taste, but the paintings of Van Dyke, Lilly (Lely) and Velasquez delighted me most."

Warwick certainly is a castle to behold, inside, outside, from every angle. By comparison, our graceful secluded Comp-ton Wynnyates was a shy thing of no past at all. This old pile dates back roughly to 915 and the daughter of Alfred the

Great, after the Danes had laid the town low. At the time of Domesday and William the Conqueror, Warwick was the property of perhaps the most conspicuous Englishman of the day, and he was allowed to keep his castle, but not for long. The Conqueror bestowed it upon a Norman who had sailed with him across the Channel, and created Henry de Newburgh the first Earl of Warwick. What a line of them followed and the way they mixed in the doings of their days! But by and large they were a singularly childless lot: one line was always giving out, but some one was brushed and polished and made his bow as the —th Earl of Warwick, and he added this and that to Warwick Castle—towers, courts, gate houses, reinforced defences. . . . Within those walls, in part rising sheer from the rocks below, stands today Anglo-Saxon mound, relics of Norman stonework, fourteenth century towers and the magnificent seventeenth century mansion lived in at the present.

One detail of that region I should like to have beheld—the 1821 monument marking the spot where an Earl of Warwick and others executed Piers Gaveston without trial. I felt the inscription would do my heart good, belonging to a nation, as I do, where we believe in a hypocritical shroud of kind words about our Great. "In the hollow of this rock was beheaded, on the 1st day of July, 1312, by barons lawless as himself, Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, the minion of a hateful king, in life and death a memorable instance of misrule."

How much more satisfaction we could take in our heroes if only we could be publicly honest about our scoundrels! Or else of course, and better still, do away with statues altogether. The most sane solution to the question of commemorative perpetuations was given by an Englishman who suggested a display of fireworks; it would do comparatively little harm and be soon over. To which my treasured *Manchester Guardian* remarked, if only in the Victorian era, instead of statues, we could have had a few fireworks!

A horde of tourists passes hour after hour, day after day

through Warwick Castle in summer. If other bands have as perfect a guide as was ours, they are fortunate. June thought he would very much do for a duke or an earl himself. Fittingly, as we left the inner court, there came a piercing shriek. Perched on the top of a great stone parapet was a peacock, tail full spread.

One dare not gaze upon Warwick Castle without also paying respects, or whatever one feels before the bones of earls who were exceedingly lively in their day, to certain remains in the Church of St. Mary. The person to write of that beautiful wrought Beauchamp (pronounced in good English, Beechem) Chapel, was the American girl of twenty, say, with mother and her clergyman father, who gazed upon those tombs along with us. If she was up to normal standards that day she has left a trail of exhausted guides from Naples to Edinburgh. Was there not some Biblical character who was smitten by God because he wanted to know too much?

One of the human delights of our summer was an American youth who unfortunately crossed our path but twice, at Warwick and later the same day at Kenilworth. His mother and perhaps his eighteen-year-old self had joined a char-a-banc party of, we judged, some days or weeks duration. The party consisted of roughly twenty maiden ladies over fifty, five widows over sixty, and four married couples over sixty-five—and this youth of eighteen. Naturally his immediate associates did not allow for what we might technically call full self-expression, and so in a breezy middle-western way he annexed the world. Everyone should be his fortunate audience, everyone a potential confidant. He dashed along full of vitality, while somewhat enfeebled ladies of his own party gazed fearsomely about to measure the distance between him and them, and take what comfort they could in such space as his robust and enthusiastic movements allowed. I may forget the ruins of Kenilworth Castle, but never the sight of that youth leaping from a char-a-banc calling hilariously as he literally pranced about, "Com-mon folks, com-mon!" and that faltering line of middle-

aged ladies with high buttoned shoes to whom the crawling over of an eighteen inch ruined wall was fraught with life's uncertainties.

One of the cathedrals we loved most was Lichfield. When we found ourselves in Lichfield, starved by two o'clock, we did not know, so ignorant were we, that the town possessed a cathedral. It is no great towering impressive thing, but small, as cathedrals go, and built of red sandstone, warm and inviting, the west front covered with statues in a friendly sort of way. It is the only church in all England with three spires, the "Ladies of the Vale." Lichfield Cathedral had, according to June, "one of the loveliest interiors I have ever seen; partly, because you could look way down to the Lady Chapel without a break, which gives a lovely impression of length and deepness. Some of the glass was especially lovely, especially the little flower shaped windows above the big ones. They were mostly purple and rose, and it was beautiful to see those small bits of color far down the cold church. As I wandered down to the Lady Chapel I found a chantry of some reverend bishop, long dead, and I knew that if I had to die and could be buried some place besides way down in the cold ground, that I would like to have an exact replica of that chantry. The marble figure was set in a recess of its own, and through two small Gothic windows you could just outline the profile by the light of two other tiny Gothic windows opposite."

Cities no end can boast cathedrals, but Lichfield can throw out its chest as being the birthplace of the one-and-only-since-time-was Mr. Boswell's Dr. Samuel Johnson. We gazed upon his birthplace over the shop of what must have been a very worthy and erudite but hardly cheery father, with his "weariness of life, an unconcern about those things which agitate mankind, and a general sensation of gloomy wretchedness." For all that, across the way stood the house where the lady of that "somewhat romantick" circumstance in his life, having followed him from Leek in her violent passion, took lodgings and "indulged her hopeless flame." When Mr. Johnson, senior,

realized the state she was in "he with a generous humanity went to her and offered to marry her, but it was then too late: her vital power was exhausted; and she actually exhibited one of the very rare instances of dying for Love." She was buried in Lichfield Cathedral, where "with a tender regard," Mr. Johnson placed a stone above her grave,

Here lies the body of
Mrs. Elizabeth Blaney, a stranger.
She departed this life
20th of September, 1694.

It was difficult to picture Joshua Reynold's Johnson making his near-sighted way about Lichfield while we were there; it is no place of other years today. But I can read Boswell now and easily see Johnson in eighteenth century Lichfield. "Last winter," wrote Johnson in a chatty letter, "I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known. . . . I wandered about for five days and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is, at least, such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart." To which Boswell adds a footnote, "This is a very just account of the relief which London affords to melancholy minds." (It was in this same letter Johnson sends other news to Milan; "Mr. Richardson is dead of apoplexy, and his second daughter has married a merchant." The sequence, we note, seems to preclude any serious Freudian manifestations.)

Warwick, Kenilworth, Lichfield, and our day had hardly begun. In Burton-on-Trent a sudden ominous and awful sound connected itself in a devastating way with our very own perfect car. Perhaps it was the sort of sound to be heard only once in a lifetime. On any happy road of no traffic which beckoned our way, when going down hill into a bit of a town . . . that sound again! Consumed with forebodings, we sought a garage. A

young man labored, unscrewed, got on his back, got on his stomach, jacked the car up, took off a wheel, got it back on again, then told us to drive off and mark results. We came down the hill again and as we braked—that sound again. . . . After three jackings and filings and wheel removings we descended the hill in heaven-sent silence. Charges for half an hour's labor and much grime and grease, six pence (twelve cents). Not another untoward sound out of our car.

There came those winding stretches of road through the deep-wooded ravine of the Derwent, with Matlock and Matlock Bath perched among the rocks and trees. By now it was early evening. The Peacock Inn at Rousley was a strong temptation, and it one of the famous old inns of England, but it was a costly thought for Parkers—and time and light enough for yet many alluring hours of driving. Still yearning back with a bit of a wrench toward the Peacock, we came suddenly upon Haddon Hall. "Haddon Hall," writes an authority on castles and manor houses, "strikes one dumb with the beauty of its grey towers among the trees; Compton Wynyates by its absolute seclusion; Cowdray by its defencelessness; Bodiam by its grimness." Wrote June: "Mom immediately became sentimental about some novelistic attachment to the castle, and it took all my powers to persuade her that when a castle has a sign in front of it 'not open till the fifth of August,' it means that it is closed the eleventh of July." So we did not see the interior of a place which had held out its spell to my weak soul since the years of my 'teens because of the book "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall," of which I never read a page.

Sometimes I think the road we drove that early evening from before Matlock to Buxton, now along the Derwent, now along the Wye, now in valleys, now over hills, the loveliest stretch in England. Again it was country which should have been walked, and explored . . . We missed Dovedale altogether, which is unpardonable. Please nobody else miss it. We had thought to spend the night in Buxton, and it was high time. If there is a more forlorn touch to a resort than great weed-

ST AND
HIDDLE
INN



RETON
HALL



RECTORY,
GAWSWORTH

terraced hotels plastered over with "For Sale" signs, I do not know it. We could not be hired to stay in Buxton, for all that the guide book had said "one of the most frequented and fashionable watering places in England" and the "most loftily situated," which means the dizzy heights of around a thousand feet.

Thank goodness our finicky souls moved us on—to what rewards! We had been driving along wooded roads beside streams, then on a road over hills, still more or less wooded as we wound up and away from Buxton, when "the scenery changed again, this time for treeless woodland. The clouds which had been over us almost all day now moved on, and the most glorious sunset of any artist's dreams now hove in view." (I make no apologies for slight discrepancies between my child's nouns and what might be more appropriate verbs.) "As we climbed higher over the pass, the moors became more uncivilized and strange, and the sun became still bigger and redder. If I woke up one morning, to find myself on that bare moor with that enormous ball hanging in the air, I would give a gulp that would startle the world, and recognize myself as a lost soul in Hades.

"The road wound on, until to our view came a house, and on that house was a sign saying 'The Cat and Fiddle Inn' and we were by the highest Inn in England. And at that moment we reached the top of the pass and saw far down below patches of fields, clusters of houses. The road still led on and on over moors but we knew that some day we would reach that earth. For miles and miles we coasted without a sound, never passing a soul," until at last the color of the sky faded to dark grey, and darker, with stars of light in distant windows, and we descended a last very steep hill into Macclesfield, and beds.

The "wild Macclesfield forest," our guide book calls that great treeless expanse of glorious rolls and views, not because of any English sense of humor, nor probably because there are those to say these moors of England once were covered with trees, but because one definition of forest is "a wilderness,"

or "a great waste place," as in olden days they spoke of "the Forrest of the Sea."

Macclesfield is a dull place, "a dirty red brick town" wrote June. But it deserves mention because accidentally it opened out unguessed treasures for the next day. People ask, "How does one know of these untouristed places?" I can tell you a trick to uncover some of the loveliest and least frequented sights you will look upon in a season, which was responsible for many a treat of our summer. Take Macclesfield, dirty, dull—get out of it as fast as you can. The R.A.C. map has us routed along a most uneventful looking road, not to be thought of. In a shop I ask to see post-cards of anything 'round about. That is the simple trick. In Macclesfield I bought a card of three places I had never heard tell of and now cannot bear to think of anyone's missing—Prestbury, about two miles from Macclesfield; Gawsworth, four miles in another direction; and Moreton Old Hall. Now we knew where to go.

Prestbury must be seen, and was, because of the Old Priest's House, or Old Vicarage, plastered and timbered with mullioned windows, and now a bank. Also because of a very ancient village church, with its Norman chapel and Saxon cross in the tree-shaded church yard. Prestbury is one of the loveliest of Cheshire villages, especially as you cross the bridge and drive along the road "in the valley." We should have driven on five miles or so north to Bramall Hall, for it is one of the choicest of Cheshire "magpie" black and white plaster and timber buildings, and nothing like them elsewhere in the world, I suppose one may safely add. We allowed the fact that we belonged south lead us south, and no sight of that thirteenth to fourteenth century home. There is, however, no use wrecking your heart because you can not see every sight in the British Isles in a summer.

But we did see the finest example of black and white magpie work in all England, Moreton Old Hall, and only because a post-card of it in drab Macclesfield had us rarin' to be off.

First, however, came the drive to Moreton Old Hall, which

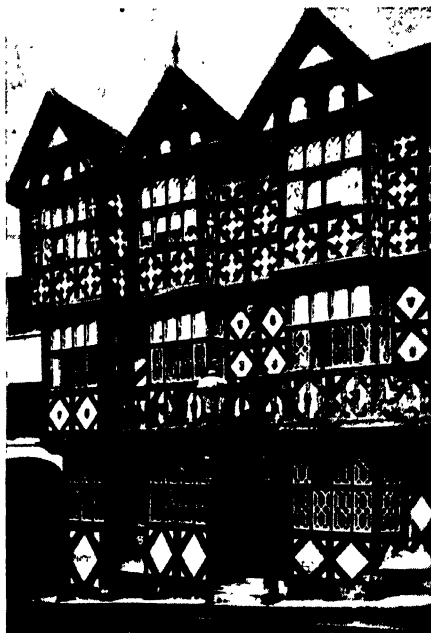
means, if one leaves out all the rest, that Gawsworth must be given its word. Do you need to be told, or do you know, that breath-taking moment when you round a bend in a shaded country road—and before your eyes stands some unsuspected scene of old-world charm you will be remembering till you die? Such was Gawsworth. True, I had bought a post-card of a plaster and timber house in Macclesfield which nobody could tell me anything about, though the guide book had committed itself so far as: "Gawsworth, with a beautiful half-timbered Hall (no admittance) and rectory and an interesting church." But what we were so unprepared for was that all you see of Gawsworth as you round a bend in the road is a beautiful half-timbered Hall with its fish pond, trees and lawn; across the road the half-timbered rectory, with its lawns and trees and flowers; beyond the pond and reflected in it, the church—just those three buildings, each one alone worth journeying miles to see, the three together making Gawsworth. Of course, straggling along further roads there is now and then something more to Gawsworth, but the one store and post office is tucked along beside the church, which gazes, when not dreaming into its pond, along an avenue of walnut trees, so thickly shaded scarcely a dot of sunlight spots the road. I should not hesitate to say that approaching Gawsworth from the north, as you turn that bend in the deserted road, you come upon one of the gems of all England.

Nor must anyone fail to enter the church, the day we were there being spruced up mightily for a wedding, whereupon June, whose eyes had never beheld a wedding, was all for digging her toes in till someone hurled her out. For inside are the tombs of the Fyttons of Gawsworth who lived in our beautiful Hall, nor in all England did we ever enjoy tombs more—"their dozens of children kneeling about them, each one minus a nose." What if time has tampered with most of their faces, some of those kneeling Fyttons have character enough all but to get up and throw rice at a wedding. As for the sorrowing and seated, still partly colored Dame Alice, her hand to her

despairing face—she is a person to look upon in pity for such grief. One of the kneeling and beruffed and still somewhat tinted daughters behind her is none other than Lady Mary Fytton, some do say “the dark lady” of Shakespeare’s sonnets, frail and lovely maid-of-honor to Queen Elizabeth. See her kneel so primly with her hands clasped across her stomach, and she it was with regular and irregular loves enough to all but blast her off the marble cushions which ease her stone knees. Dame Alice’s gesture of despair may have been inspired as much by her anxieties over a rather active daughter as over her deceased and no longer potentially worrisome brood. If there be those who love a pun, there is one on a tomb in Gaws-
worth: “Fytton to wear a heavenly diadem.”

Ah the pages on end that could be written about the half-timbered Hall and half-timbered rectory and the square-towered church of Gawsworth, and the lives they have sheltered these hundreds of years. It is all I can do to tear myself from that almost unreal, because so perfect, corner of rural England. June knew how to get me away. She let out the brake and coasted ecstatically down the avenue of walnuts, I running for dear life to catch up to her giggling young soul.

And yet, if we had not left Gawsworth we never should have seen Moreton Old Hall—and there you are. It was built in the early days of Queen Elizabeth when the sound of the hammer must have been heard pretty much all over this England. Above the windows is carved in none-too-finished lettering: “God . is . al . in . al . thing . this . windovs . where . made . by . William . Moreton . in . the . yeare . of . oure . Lord . MDLJX Rycharde . Dale . Carpeder . made . thies . windovs . by . the . Grac . of . God” (Mr. Cecil Aldin calls him the “carpeder with the cold in his head.”) The rambly irregular black and white, almost alarmingly patterned structure—I could only write: “a sight to make you fairly cross-and-pop-eyed”—covers three sides of a quadrangle, adding much to the charm of its inner court by being open on one side to



FEATHERS'
HOTEL,
LUDLOW



STOKESAY CASTLE

fields and trees. It is well off the road and completely surrounded by a moat, with an old stone bridge flung across to the gate house, through which a timbered passage leads into such a court as you have never beheld, because of its black and white patterned, great bay-windowed, utterly irregular enclosure on three sides.

After coming down to earth, turn right and through a particularly fascinating old door ascend to the long gallery 66' by 12' 6", both sides nothing but one small mullioned window close after another. It could have been used, say authorities, for nothing if not bowls or "skittles." There is a small chapel to see and a priest's room, and this and that, all unfurnished today. The place once abounded in secret passages, some still explorable. If you would leave with a picture of a Cheshire Tudor manor house intact, adding what your imagination wills in the line of lords and ladies and doings gay and every day, do not cross that court into the kitchen and Great Hall. We were so excited at the prospect we decided to have tea in this unbelievable house, tea being all they serve, though it was but eleven o'clock in the morning. But when we beheld the unspeakable atrocities of mid-Victorian plush and gee-gaws and vases and family photographs and spotted tablecloths supplied by the misguided souls who now inhabit that part of the old manor house and are allowed thus to desecrate it, we turned and fled. The shades of those good "wisket-makers, jersey combers, mugmen, wold throwers, towdressess, aledrapers and galloon weavers, and broaches-makers" who inhabited nearby Congleton in the days of Moreton Old Hall's building, and whose descendants today are so proud of their Hall that the butcher paid two guineas (over ten dollars) for a book just because he heard Moreton Old Hall was mentioned in it—those worthies should descend upon the Hall in a body and strip it bare of all its dreadful junk. And then pray that some tenant with a feeling for the building he inhabits will come along and furnish it as it so richly deserves.

Let no one take my ignorant word for it, but one of the great books on domestic architecture in England calls Moreton Old Hall "the last word in timber house construction." And without that accidental post-card in Macclesfield we should never have laid eyes on it!

CHAPTER 10

WE CHARGE THROUGH SHREWSBURY TO THE REMAINS OF
ROMAN URICONIUM; DOWN PEACEFUL CORVEDALE TO LUDLOW,
PAST THE OLDEST INHABITED HOUSE IN BRITAIN (PERHAPS).
STOKESAY CASTLE AND TINTERN ABBEY



SHREWSBURY is another one of the supposedly fine sights of England which neither June nor I reacted to with any fit appreciation—"that place of broken illusions," the daughter calls it. We reached Shrewsbury on a Saturday afternoon—and never go near an English town you want to drive about in any comfort on a Saturday afternoon. Invariably there is a surging, crammed mass of marketing humanity, too many of whom seem to treat an approaching car exactly as do English dogs—happy on one side of the street, but when they see you coming they decide to walk out so that they can stop an inch from your front wheels. We had thought we were not going to be able to tear ourselves away from Shrewsbury for some days, and in despair we were out of it, I blush to report, in half an hour. There were charming old buildings, but by the time we reached Shrewsbury we had been looking most of the morning at half-timbered buildings which had seemed to us more charming. The carved wooden roof and windows of St. Mary's church won my heart—but too, too many human beings every place. We headed, relieved to be in the country again, toward Wroxeter.

For Wroxeter near the foot of the now so harmless-looking Wrekin, which past counting long ago "flung fires of lower earth to sky," possesses the ruins of Uriconium, the Roman city built in the first century to act as a center for the forces needed to keep the barbarian British, driven to the shelter of Welsh mountains, in check. The curator was a most kindly informative soul, who needed to talk about his birds and flowers and rabbits as much as his loved ruins of a once thriving bustling Roman city with its forum, arches, temples, baths, houses. . . . Once it did its share toward holding back barbarians for five hundred years—and the United States is not yet two hundred years old. Then barbarians sacked the city and burnt it to the ground, leaving the earth to cover with the years every trace except one short stretch of wall.

We found the curator just a bit crestfallen. He had been showing some Chinese tourists his almost two-thousand-year-old ruins, and they were not at all impressed. What is two thousand years to China?

Through Much Wenlock, with its half-timbered Guildhall resting on wooden columns, its ruined Priory, on through lovely Corvedale, where we had tea in a small half-timbered roadside inn, to Ludlow and the famed Feathers Inn. We should have dwelt even more gratefully than we did on this quite perfect sunny Saturday with its generous measure of Cheshire and "Salop" sights, had we realized then it was to be practically our last sunny day for five solid weeks. That next day in Ludlow people referred to the rest of the summer as "the first day of the rain." We were to do all of Wales and all of Scotland and Northumberland and Durham and Yorkshire, and down to the haunts of Robin Hood in Nottinghamshire before we were ever again to know a full sunny day, except one Scottish Sabbath.

But to us when we woke that Sunday morning in the Feathers Inn in Ludlow, incidentally having no idea it was Sunday, it was merely—rain. You expect a certain amount of rain in England, the way you expect a certain amount of sun

in Italy. Day after day we often had had to raise our top for a few miles—we got so that we could do it almost without stopping the car—and down it would go again the second the last drop made its small splash. You could not have the charm of English roads and country if heaven forgot to keep it properly sprinkled. But, it is Graham Wallas who says the question to ask about anything in this world is, "How much?" My daughter is an extremely pleasant child to travel with, and I learned that one of her pleasant qualities was that in all those five what-could-have-been dismal weeks, she never so much as once mentioned the weather. I could not set her a horrible example, though there were moments when my soul ached to explode with curses which would let the skies know exactly the opinion I had of them. She claimed, apparently with utter honesty, that she didn't mind rain, so I, who would be content perched directly astride the Equator in the dry season, told myself and the world I didn't mind it either. . . . And learned that enough of any curse brings you to the point where, if you have not gone crazy with despair, you really don't mind. I suppose "inured" is the word. But I hasten to add that even in those five wet, cold, windy weeks, there were few days when we could not put the top down for some part of the day.

Since it was Sunday at Ludlow—I went out finally to learn why the church bells were making such a fuss—and as everything we especially wanted to see except the outside of timbered houses and castle walls was closed, we departed after Sunday luncheon in the handsome dining room with its carved mantel piece and patterned plaster ceiling. The main roads from Ludlow being not to our liking, we turned off left and were immediately rewarded by one of our surprise manor houses in its wooded park, Hampton Court, built from the ransom of prisoners taken at Agincourt by a Yeoman of the Robes to Henry IV, and worse could be done with ransom. Its great entrance tower, embattled and machicolated, in the midst of peaceful lawns and great cedars made such an appeal June sat

by the side of the road, rain having stopped, to sketch it, and I sat in the car and gazed.

It might perhaps be more appropriate to tell here of two Herefordshire sights which normally would be seen just before or after Ludlow, but which in reality we crossed back over most of Wales to visit. One of them beckoned because we read a sentence in a book about the "oldest inhabited house in the country" in Corvedale, after we had left Corvedale far behind. Somehow I wanted to see that house, and could find nothing definite about it—"Upper Millichope" was on no map and in no guide book. We did locate a Millichope, which was a large inhabited Manor house built in 1820. It took more courage than I possessed to drive into Millichope and ask where Upper Millichope and the oldest inhabited house in the country was. I got half way up and stuck, suffering. Finally I located the garage and inquired of a chauffeur, whereupon male persons assembled from all sides, each eager to give information about Upper Millichope, and insisted we drive through those glorious grounds to find it ("only don't go up by the house!"—as if I needed to be told that in my discomfort). By the time we located the house we had floundered over so many false roads and lanes, had taken so many wrong turnings, had gone through so many experiences, the lark of arriving any place was enough—we didn't much care what was found in our hilarious searchings. It was well, for in a way we did not find a great deal, and yet I still think a house which has been lived in steadily since the twelfth century when it was built for the King's Forester is worth looking at. What gave us the thrill was, however, feeling we had ferreted out something for ourselves. You have no idea the time we had locating that farm house. When we got there, expecting rather to find a man taking tickets and selling a guide book and post-cards, there was a girl washing sundry clothes just outside the eight hundred year old Norman doorway; inside, walls six feet thick with their splayed slits of windows and the enormous fire place, another girl was boiling clothes and baking in an oven which had been used its

hundreds of years. They seemed surprised that anyone should want to see their old house, yet told us in a very friendly way to go on up stairs if we liked. The stone stairs wound up in the thickness of the walls, and led to empty and unused decay and disorder, yet the ancient-mullioned windows and stone seats, the old fire places, were there. "Wouldn't you love to fix it all up?" June's eyes sparkled. Yet the ride back from Upper Millichope through the valley of the Onny over Bishop Castle and the miles of Welsh hills and valleys . . . to Aberdovey on the west coast—that was something so marvelous and unforgettable that we must always bless our stars that we were witless enough to cross hill and dale to look at a house we had passed within a mile of two days before.

Nor was the oldest inhabited house in Britain (and I believe it is not really the oldest at that, but which is the oldest I don't know) the sole reason for those erratic Welsh wanderings. What a strange red track is our own marked route in Wales compared with the sensible plans of the R.A.C.! We decided in the middle of Wales that we really ought to have seen Stokesay Castle when we were over by Ludlow. The sun came out—let's cross back and take a look at Stokesay!

I should have been plagued forever had we not turned back, for every authority you look into claims that Stokesay Castle, or really manor house, is the oldest and best specimen in England of a fortified manor house as distinguished from a castle. The house was already standing almost as it is now in 1291, when its owner received permission to strengthen the mansion with a wall and to crenelate or embattle it with loop-holes; and almost seven hundred years later all is still in a remarkable state of preservation, only today raspberries and vegetables and bright flowers grow well-tended in the moat. No photograph or drawing, however perfect, could ever do justice to Stokesay in summer, because of the gayest of flowers inside the old walls and out.

Actually the first stones of Stokesay were laid in 1066; and the north tower built about 1115. In the thirteenth century

the owner of Stokesay went off to the crusades with good Prince Edward. It was while he was gone the great hall was built. Lawrence de Ludlowe, "millionaire" cloth merchant of his day, purchased Stokesay toward the end of the thirteenth century and his family occupied the manor house for ten generations. (Ah, we wandering roofless Parkers!) Then, there being no male heirs, it went as wedding portion to a daughter who married Richard Vernon of Haddon Hall.

Henry VIII appointed one Leland to journey about and report on the state of cathedrals, colleges and abbeys throughout the kingdom. His records furnish invaluable descriptions of sixteenth century England, for while scenery does not interest him in the least, he sets down details as to bridges, buildings, ownership and the like, and is quoted in every travel book written. This is merely by way of introducing the statement that I stand ready for orders from any king or lesser personage to spend my life digging up the histories of old English manor houses. Take just little Stokesay in Shropshire—if you brought Stokesay to life it would mean crossing with William from Normandy, the development of feudalism, the century-long troubles between England and Wales, the crusades, the gradual growth in importance and wealth of the merchant class. By the time we come up to Lord Craven, owner of Stokesay in the seventeenth century, we fight in Germany and the Netherlands under Henry, Prince of Orange—and m'lord only seventeen.

The romance to weave about that Lord Craven and Elizabeth, "Queen of Hearts" and Queen of Bohemia! It takes us back in part to the days of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Never did genteel knight serve his lady with more valor and loyalty and sacrifice.

Came the Civil Wars, and praise be, the peaceful surrender of Stokesay to the Parliamentarians, else it were now full of cannon-ball holes, or worse. It should be considered the duty of people who live in fascinating unreproducible structures always to surrender. Let them take out their valor in ways less

unkind to posterity than allowing the enemy to ruin what later days can so gratefully gaze upon.

Sir Samuel Baldwyn in the seventeenth century builds on the timbered, panelled and carved rooms, blessings on him . . . and since 1727 empty silence. Bless still more the Allcroft family who purchased the crumbling and neglected place years ago, and preserved it; who still hold it, and preserve it, and allow you and me to wander as we will through its empty rooms filled with so much for a fee too small to mention. The charming English women who live in the charming carved and timbered Elizabethan gate house across the gay moat, once forbidding water, and who tend the gay flowers and take your small fee, will also serve you tea, and fresh raspberries with it.

Words cannot describe Stokesay any more than Moreton Old Hall, and both so utterly different. You must needs cut through the churchyard, cross the flowered moat, pass under the timbered Elizabethan gate house into the bewalled turf courtyard, and then roam for yourself what is left of the deserted great banqueting hall, over fifty feet by thirty, the three storied tower with loop-holed parapet, the private rooms with their cautious windows and fire places, the beautiful Solar, or drawing room, panelled from floor to ceiling with its magnificent chimney piece of carved oak. . . .

But there may be those who agree with my daughter: "We saw Stokesay Castle in the morning. Mom thought it wonderful but it was rather unimpressive and terribly ratty and rundown."

All of which digression has given June quite time to finish her sketch of Hampton Court, back that Sunday, whereupon with top down and a bit of sun now and then we started off in roundabout less-trodden ways to Hereford and its fine cathedral, whose Lady Chapel June thought "the most attractive she had ever seen." Cathedrals have had strange beginnings. Offa, powerful eighth century King of Mercia, invited Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, accepted suitor of his daughter's hand, to be his guest and then proceeded to murder him. Of course, if all

such acts of those uneasy centuries had led to buildings, the whole of England would have looked a good bit like twentieth century London. Ethelbert's unhospitable death led to the erection and generous endowment of the first Hereford Cathedral by a king with an uncomfortable conscience, and Ethelbert in due time was sainted, though if given the choice he might have preferred more years of earthly existence in which to marry the daughter of Offa and enjoy his rightful quota of killings of his own. In the long distance view, however, he got a good deal more glory from being a saint. Strange things, saints. There was a still more important and second Hereford saint, and they needed him, too, since the miracle-working powers of the slain Ethelbert after four hundred years were beginning to wear thin. Bishop Cantelupe came to hand. He died on his thirteenth century journey back from Rome, whereupon his companion chaplain, according to a no uncommon mediæval church practice, had the flesh separated from the bones by boiling. The flesh of the good Bishop was buried on the Continent, the bones and heart (boiled?) were carried on to England. Five years after the bones had been buried in Hereford, miracles occurred. "There were raised from death to life three score several persons, one and twenty lepers healed, and three and twenty blind and dumb men received their sight and speech. Twice King Edward I sent sick falcons to be cured at his tomb." By the expenditure of "vast sums of money" his canonization was procured, the last English saint, and for forty years the most popular.

From Hereford we drove down the Wye Valley over Ross and Monmouth toward Tintern Abbey, torn between enthusiasm over the scenery and suspicions that unless we postponed our visit as late as possible, we should be running into Sunday trippers, and we would *not* see Tintern Abbey unless, sweet unselfish souls, we could have it almost to ourselves.

I digress again, and thereby indirectly pay a wisp only toward a debt too great ever to settle in full. For I had the rare experience of having been taught "English" in High School by

a teacher who made me love it. Miss Elizabeth Packard, grey hair mixed with blonde, no bigger than a minute and a bit jerky in her movements, was somewhat disapproved of in certain quarters because she was "too popular" with the students. When I hear the tales and see the disastrous effects of what the average teacher of English does to her subject, I can only bless heaven again and yet again that I left High School thrilled over certain poets, enthused over Shakespeare, fascinated with classics it was the thing, even then, to consider a bore.

One of the enthusiasms of my 'teens, due to Miss Packard, was Wordsworth. I have tried to pass a bit of it on to June but haven't the trick at all. She scorns him. To me Tintern Abbey meant Wordsworth, which I now realize was a wide stretch of fact. For that poem on which for thirty years I had vaguely based my longing to look upon Tintern Abbey, when I came to read it over recently, says not one word about the place. I was not a little surprised to come upon a book on Tintern Abbey which made the statement in connection with Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," "Although the poem . . . makes no reference to Tintern Abbey, beyond the allusion in the title, it is unquestionable that it has sent more pilgrims to the shrine than any other piece of verse or prose."

However, we would have no trippers for Tintern. Imagine our horror when we rounded the last curve in the wooded Wye Valley—and between us and the Abbey stood what seemed to our appalled eyes hundreds of char-a-bancs! In despair we betook ourselves to a nearby tea garden and ate. They have all *got* to go sometime, we reasoned, and we can sit here waiting for the last car to be on its way till the end of time. God grew weary of all sightseers. He turned the heavens upside down and emptied a season's rain on the Wye Valley in a few hours. (Of course being Omnipotent, He immediately found an entire fresh supply to do for the next five weeks.) More water could not have come down all at once than deluged those hundreds

scrambling for shelter in cars, char-a-bancs and doorways—there is little shelter to be found in ruined abbeys! We ducked for our wee car, made for the nearest hotel, and got to Tintern Abbey in the morning before a soul was around even to let us in.

Once the gate was opened for us, we had those soft ruined arches in their setting of hills, trees and river, just as I had always dreamed I must see them, no other soul about.

Almost any ruined abbey makes a certain appeal, impossible to the most perfect intact church. Is it because it calls on the individual to create for himself, to be, for once, the continuance of the column, the completion of the arch? I have more to do with ruins than with structures standing whole. But there are two further reasons for the appeal of ruined abbeys in the British Isles: so often they stood apart, hills, trees, rivers their wild setting, eight hundred years ago, today. A ruin so open to the skies is bared also to nearby trees, and to the perfection of the arch I may complete is the added perfection of the great branches, the foliage it frames far more intimately than can any building which of necessity shuts nature out. If one may add ivy to the ruins, the heart is pulled in very pain for the beauty of what God and man and time together can accomplish.

Yet a last reason for the appeal of ecclesiastical ruins: before the misdeeds of the latter-day hands of man could be multiplied, hands guilty of such sins against the early and so often intuitively right work of mason and builder, abbeys were abandoned—no garish cluttering tombs, no endless “in memoriams” on every available foot of space, no distressing hodge-podge due to the fear that the little short scurrying life of mortals be forgotten. . . . In a ruined abbey one can forget. There indeed nothing need come between one’s own soul and the worship of something beautiful.

Tintern Abbey. Can the mind keep from making comparisons? If enough time elapses between experience or sights, perhaps. It was not a case of disappointment, but that I had

seen Netley too recently, and the impression of that small ruined corner of the world, so apparently off the beaten track, so unconcernedly appealing, was still filling too much of the space in my heart reserved for abbeys. Perhaps it was the lack of ivy at Tintern, the "smug neatness" of it. Ivy is such an essential part of ruins! Perhaps I was allowing the anxiety lest char-a-bancs or rain land their contents upon us to hold at a distance that feeling of peace and surrender which must be present for the full appreciation of beauty.

Yet not rain nor person stirred as we drove on down the Wye Valley, fresh, wet, sparkling green without sun, bowers of closing trees and all but closing cliffs and hills about us. We parked the car at Moss Cottage and clambered up through moss covered woods to the tree-decked cliffs of Wyndcliffe, and there gazed upon its famed view of the devious Wye, its hills and valleys.

And then came Wales.

CHAPTER II

AND THEN CAME WALES, AND WILD BEASTS (SINGULAR), AND
GYPSIES (PLURAL), WITH THE LOVES, EMBALMED, (ALSO
PLURAL) OF SIR JOHN PRYCE



I KNOW roughly as much today about Baluchistan as I knew about Wales before the summer of 1930. Known Wales heretofore comprised Lloyd George, admirable but somewhat vague Welsh miners, and the Harvard Glee Club singing "Men or Harlech" of an early summer evening on the Widener Library steps. And there I find myself stretching honesty. For all the three years I have heard the Harvard Glee Club sing "Men of Harlech," not until this summer did I get Harlech placed with any accuracy. Geography and history have too little to do with the enjoyment of song to start us bursting through singing ranks into the library to learn latitude, dates, genealogy of combatants. It would be a hard life if we all had to draw a map of Tintagel before we could be inspired by Isolde's last song to Tristan.

After we started for Wales my further knowledge had largely to do with hills and mountains which we should either get over or should not. And if we stuck, as it surely did appear from all accounts that we might, we should stick long before a dark Welshman with his sheep would pass by and rescue us. Nor would he rescue us, as he'd not have even our Neolithic understanding of cars.

One thing was certain. We were both of us weary of sight-seeing—not another church nor castle nor manor house nor cathedral could we bear the thought of beholding; therefore a country of mountains and sparse hamlets bereft of historical landmarks was coming into our overfed lives exactly when we needed it. Wild Wales, indeed; the wilder the more welcome.

Also, brains overstocked with the culture of past ages, bodies yearned to be put to primitive uses. I felt starved for physical weariness. To climb and climb and climb Welsh mountains until one foot could hardly be dragged after another, and tumble into bed aching in every muscle—grant me that, wild Wales!

Alas, and yet not altogether alas, it rained and it rained and it rained and it rained in wild Wales—but the few hours it stopped one heaven-sent day meant climbing until I could hardly drag one foot after another, tumbling into bed, aching in every muscle. The not-altogether-alas is that we found Wales so glorious and beyond all our anticipations that had we been blessed with good weather I fear we should have lingered among Welsh crags and beside Welsh lakes and along Welsh roads until the Austin Motor Company would have put sheriffs on our tracks to recover a car supposed to be returned in three months. There is such a longing in me to get back and spend a whole summer in Wales on foot, and that while my aging bones can still get me up and down mountains and across cataracts and over boulders, that I look upon our days in Wales this last wet summer as a mere tantalizing introduction to what *must* lie ahead.

We entered Wales from the south, after turning back because we discovered we had missed Raglan Castle, and Raglan Castle should be seen, and was. It was our next-to-the-last sight-seeing gesture. We did not even possess a guide book of Wales, though we compromised at Abergavenny and bought something cheap because I had a horrible suspicion the R.A.C. was routing us to the sort of town we were scorning. One paragraph about Aberystwyth and one photograph of Aberystwyth

confirmed our worst forebodings. It was here we decided also, instead of going north-west to that city with its dreadful promenade, "concreted from end to end, well provided with seats . . . for upwards of a mile a fine array of residences, hotels, boarding houses . . ." that we would turn north-east and go back across Wales and a mile or so into England for a look at Stokesay Castle and Little Millichope. (Ah yes, the desire to keep on beholding died somewhat of a lingering death.) We thus exchanged the sights of one of the four colleges of Wales, "a huge building which is a conglomeration of almost every kind of architecture and has a frontage of 412 feet . . ." for miles of as glorious country as we saw all summer, from Builth in central Wales to Craven Arms in Shropshire, or Salop. But there is one great drawback to Wales which by nature I could never learn to accept philosophically. No matter where you went and what road you took, you were missing something marvelous by not going some place else by some other road—or indeed the same place by some other road. So while I have not a backward qualm about depriving ourselves of Aberystwyth, I can't bear to think of the Welsh country we failed to see getting there.

For our first day in Wales the sun shone a good part of the time, which is perhaps one reason why that first day stands out so vividly—my memory is very conscious of the sun.

Perhaps there was something symbolic in our introduction to Wales.

Have you any preconceived notion as to the first thing you might behold out of the ordinary in your first Welsh town? With the real Wales now so vivid in my mind, I can no longer recall what ahead of time I might have expected to find, if anything at all. But I do know I was absolutely unprepared for what we saw strolling down the middle of the road as we rounded almost our first Welsh turning—a very large elephant. It is a wonder we didn't knock him down and run clean over him. Instead we almost ran right between his legs. . . . Any motorist on English roads must be relieved that it is sheep



ROYAL TYNCORNEL HOTEL, TAL-Y-LLYN LAKE



NAUT FFRANCON PASS, WALES

rather than elephants which give wool, and cows rather than elephants which give milk. I had never realized that something would come into my motoring life to make me appreciate the size of a cow.

Why was an elephant walking down a street in Wales? Just because. Had we seen two elephants in Wales I might feel the subject deserved serious research. Let one be merely an act of God and pass on, as we did. Perhaps God sent that elephant into our lives for a Purpose. He wanted us to appreciate the fact that Wales was really a strange and different land, with different customs, scenery, citizens. Said He: "Here is an article of my creation to jolt your mind into pliability" and sent the elephant. An elephant is an object which an Austin Seven simply must take notice of. Indeed, a Rolls-Royce is in no position to ignore an elephant on the average British road.

That first day we saw wild Wales only at a distance, but we were conscious of those mountains about us. To a person who judges mountains by the Himalayas or even our modest Rockies or Switzerland, and who has not seen Wales for himself, talk about Welsh mountains and wild Wales, if accompanied by statistics on the altitudes of Welsh "peaks," makes the teller appear almost ridiculous. Snowdon, the lofty, is 3,560 feet high. Smile pityingly. Then go to Wales and look upon the Snowdon massif, upon Glyder Fawr, Carnedd Llewelyn, upon Cader Idris, upon the Beryns or the Black Mountains . . . and if you add to the testimony of your eyes a bit of work with your feet, you will have a new respect for Einstein and the Law of Relativity. Put Wales in Tibet, and I'll grant you could play marbles over her wee hillocks; bring her back to where that 3,560 feet Snowdon is the highest mountain in England or Wales, and but for Ben Nevis too far away to spoil the picture, the highest mountain in the British Isles, and you'll put on a pair of mountain boots with some respect and have an eye out for the weather, lest they bring back your frozen corpse on a stretcher because of a sudden September storm.

There is more to Wales for wildness than its mountains.

Scorn them if you will, there are still the ruins of Welsh castles from which the eyes find no escape, albeit if sightseeing weary you need not step foot within their tumbled stones. Yet they serve to keep you mindful of the days when history matched scenery, and Norman Marcher Barons and Welsh chieftains kept the country broiling in chaos and disorder.

Indeed, to begin to sense the turmoil of the past which surged about crags and passes, moors and valleys, without going back so far as Rome and her military penetrations which stopped at nothing, one must take account of no less a person than the warlike Arthur—not the knight of chivalry but of the sword only. It was in Wales those legends of a godlike king had their first flowering, to spread with the centuries over England, Scotland and a good part of Europe. Back in those ages of dim history one Llywarch Hên, bard and hero, lost twenty-four of his stalwart sons fighting against the Saxons and the Irish.

Normans enter the scene, to find Wales a mountainous region of chieftain warring against chieftain and all warring in time against Normans. Great Llewelyns clanked forth from their strongholds and fought and died, first slaying their share of the Norman-English enemy, until one was recognized by Henry III in the thirteenth century as Prince of all Wales. Edward I, builder of the great Welsh castles, laid his heavy mailed fist upon the land, whereupon in time the head of a Llewelyn hung above the gate of the Tower in London.

The end of the fourteenth century, the last and greatest hero of Wales rode forth to free his mountains and valleys from the accursed “foreigner”—Owen Glendower, brave soldier, statesman, diplomat, who passed from this earth no man knows where or when. He gave Wales its last glow of independence and unity—the crumbling ivy clad castles north, south, east, or west bear witness to the price paid. There was no strength, no wealth, no energy left to build again what had been laid waste in the cause of national freedom, to no permanent results. Years of lawless mountain bloodshed and turmoil,

the battle of Bosworth and a Tudor king from Wales . . . and finally the Union of England and Wales in 1535.

And Wales? Mountains have a way with them of nursing independence, of keeping something about the spirit held high, where plains folk bow to fate. The legitimate heritage of Wales was her poetry and her music, which was the integral accompaniment to her poetry, handed down from generation to generation by a people who honored their bards as they did their warriors, if not more; her language, her culture which bespoke certain riches of the inner spirit. But the upper class Welshman, as so often happened in the history of mingling cultures, thought it the better part of expediency and valor to ape his conquerors. Add to that the sooty, grimy finger of industrialism which gripped the lowlands, and today we have three Wales—Welsh Wales, mainly the people of her mountains, and the lowlier people of her plains, holding fast to language, poetry and some spiritual content difficult for outsiders to grasp and measure; second, what Zimmern calls Industrial or American Wales, with its mines and coal fields, and those keen-witted Welsh miners I had long admired from afar; third, the upper class English Wales, and Zimmern adds that the English influence on Wales has been “damping, chilling and repressive.” I quote him again, for his “Impressions of Wales” gives a short but comprehensive picture of today. As a man who had taught younger men in Oxford and Wales, he could say, “Setting ideas before Welshmen is like lighting a fire of straw, while talking to Englishmen is more like trying to kindle wet wood.” That he uttered at Oxford, albeit in Jesus College, intellectual Mecca in England of the Welsh student.

All of this you come to sense in some degree as you cover the hills and valleys, the moors and mountain passes of Wales, —the language strange indeed to Anglo-Saxon ears, the poetry and music, if you’ve been lucky enough to hear some of it, the independence and “difference” of her still more or less isolated hill dwellers. As to the quickness of their educated wits, I let Zimmern speak for that. But it stands to reason that there

must be some contrast between dwellers of rugged Welsh countryside and the people whose neat low-lying fields are bound by trim-cut hedges.

ALONG the valley of the Usk we rode that first sunshiny afternoon—"sumwat mountayneous," sixteenth century Leland called it—and knew we needed five times more time for Wales than we could give it. We refused to turn aside to look at the ruin's of Abergavenny's Castle, "more often stained with infamy of treachery than any other in Wales." They did things in the large in Wales. One owner of that castle invited all his vassals to Christmas dinner in the great hall, then opened the oaken doors, let in his men, and murdered every guest. About then we were near to that condition where the bygone appeal of Abergavenny came close home. "People with decaying constitutions are recommended to this county in spring to take goats whey which redeems some from the most desperate situations."

I have no regrets over passing by the ruins of Abergavenny's Castle, but alas that on that sunny day we were not wise enough to take the north-east road out of Abergavenny for Pandy, and there turn up that rare and lovely road along the Honddu, or the Vale of Ewyas. In seven miles or so we should have come to the ruins of the twelfth century Llanthony Priory, still remote and unvisited enough so that one can appreciate how yet more remote and untouristed were its Norman arches in those days when perpetually terrified monks refused to tremble longer, having no "mind to sing to the wolves"—and took themselves off and down to somewhat more gregarious haunts. There is an inn built in the ruins of the Prior's house, and I know now that some day either that shall be my headquarters for tramping this whole beautiful region, or else the "snug little wayside fishing inn," the *Queens Head* above the Honddu, close to where it leaves the main road; or perhaps a

picturesque inn at Llanfihangel Crucorney. Heigh-ho, Wales is an ache for what we missed!

And yet what we saw! That day something of the valley of the Usk, which cleaves its pathway into the heart of Wales, the Sugar Loaf ahead, the Black Mountains on either side, river below, trees snuggling in crevasses, covering slopes, bordering streams, and streams leaping rocks right and left, to join the river; well-to-do homes along the hillsides, the ruin of a castle over Crickhowell. . . . Our road, which meant not taking the one following the Usk to Bwlch and Brecon and goodness knows what we missed, but our road which ran along a tributary of the Usk to Tolgarth should have led us to the Three Cocks Inn, where for days before Wales we had known we were going to have tea. We were miles beyond the road branching off to the Three Cocks Inn on our way to Builth along the valley of the Welsh Wye, which empties into the Irish Sea at Aberystwyth, when we realized our weight of woe. Well then, there is one more bit of Wales to see next time.

It will be no hardship to traverse twice that valley of the Welsh Wye "pent in a rocky trough between the Epynt and the bold Radnorshire heights of Aberedw. . . . Fringed with woodland upon either side . . . these turbulent reaches are a dream of beauty." Next time, too, being more Welsh conscious, I shall make an appropriate gesture in the direction of an obelisk which stands where the Edw tumbles into the Wye. Here Llewelyn, turbulent hero, Prince of North Wales back in the thirteenth century, spent alone his last night on earth. It was the next day he met his death while hurrying to join his troops—and his severed head was sent to decorate the Tower of London. This time instead of feeling the inner urges of Welsh patriotism we had each a wary eye out for a likely spot to satisfy our mundane hungers, and found it in a small gay-gardened cottage beside the road, the river churning below.

After Builth we turned east for—I like to sling these Welsh names about, "sling" being a well chosen word when my nose is flattened out against the map ere I dare write the

second letter of any proper name—for, then, Llanfihangel Naut-Melan (not to be confused—keep on reading—with Llanfihangel Aberbythych or Llanfihangel-geneu'r-glyn, nor yet Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, and I wish there was some excuse for me to bring in casual mention of Llanfair-mathafarneithaf; nor are Llansaintffraid-Cwmduddwr, Pontrhydfendigaed, or Ys-putty Cynfyn so weak either—nor did we see Hay). Do the Welsh play spelling-bee?

Then came a stretch where the grand expanse of Radnor Forest, over two thousand feet in elevation, bore off to our left, a high, treeless, heathery, rolling, yet almost level, expanse of land from which you see the Welsh and English world. We loved those strange miles, their breath-taking views right and left, the wild moorland about us.

We passed New Radnor, a sleepy village with nothing to arrest the wayfarer's eye, yet from this nondescript cluster of houses Bishop Baldwin and Giraldus, the Welsh twelfth century traveler and historian, as history went in those days, once set forth to enlist Welsh recruits for the Third Crusade—about which Welsh warriors were less rather than more enthused since they had not begun to exhaust the possibilities of slaughter near at home. This whole county of Radnorshire, which Henry VIII created out of lands from subdued Lord Marchers, is a part of the British Isles one could spend entranced days in, and never be done admiring. Up hill and down dale, over Knighton, crossing a portion of that dyke Offa of Mercia had dug north and south from coast to coast to mark the eighth century boundary between England and Wales, to Craven Arms in England, where we slept that pouring night.

Stokesay and Upper Millichope stowed away, back to Wales we turned and I wish the world might take the exact roads we drove, those miles after miles ending in the exact spot we ended. Only it was a matter for self-congratulations that perfect day that nobody in the world seemed aware of what Welsh roads had to offer. Except gypsies. . . .

To date I have said nothing about gypsies, yet how can I longer leave gypsies out? Were they not almost as ubiquitous a part of our summer as hills and valleys, sheep and cows, and especially ubiquitous in Wales? We were content to let sheep and cows pass without much intellectual questioning, quite conscious, let me hasten to add, that our knowledge on the subject of sheep and cows was very far from complete. But gypsies intrigued us mightily. Like many a city bred soul, I have done my share of mooning over gypsies. There is a ringing sort of a call to the faith Arthur Symonds made some twenty years or so ago which is difficult to read without forgetting Home and Duty. . . . "They (Gypsies) are the symbol of our aspirations, and we do not know it; they stand for the will for freedom, for friendship with nature, for the open air, for change and the sight of many lands, for all in us that is a protest against progress. . . . He is the wanderer whom all of us who are poets, or love the wind, are summed up in. . . . He does what we dream. He is the last romance left in the world.' Where is the soul who echoes not at all to Symonds: "The desire of the natural man is to go his own way, a friend among friends, without choice among roads, as all roads lead somewhere, and everywhere there is sun and wind. He has no desire to work for the sake of work, an odious modern creed from which only the gypsy is traditionally and persistently exempt. He turns his back on great cities . . . filled with smoke and noise, unnatural speed, degraded into the likeness of a vast machine, creating and devastating soulless bodies for useless tasks. . . ."

Who can read poems about gypsies without a tug at the heart to make one grow impatient over houses, and city streets, and men's fine citified ways? There are pictures of gypsies, and the red and orange and green and blue, the gold earrings, the bracelets—how dull our tight-fitting dark cloth suits, our colorless following of each drab fashion! There is gypsy music . . . and the world of banks and business, where "little men of little souls rise up to buy and sell again," becomes a thing to escape

from the open road and autumn leaves and the smoke of a camp fire.

There is a strain in almost every man that makes at times a monk of him in a monastery by a winding river, and no care for the goods of the world, and no worry for today and the next. There is a strain in every man that makes a gypsy of him, for not only can the cares of a cement-bound world with its codes and responsibilities be cast aside, but the freedom of all outdoors is gained and two can gypsy together. The blue sky, the green turf, smoke curling skyward, song, color. . . .

All well and good, all well and good . . . until day after day you pass the gypsies on an English or a Welsh or a Scots road. Then you realize that, just as the red and orange and blue and green have faded and worn to soiled dullness, and there is no music, and little flaring beauty indeed, so must your idealized picture of gypsy life lose its gay, colorful, singing tones in soiled, cold, wet reality, hustled forever to one side of the road by honking cars. I would be a gypsy in another age, another land, another climate. I would be a gypsy in those years when soap and water meant comparatively little to anyone, be she a queen. I would be a gypsy in those centuries when only so could a woman have roamed the open road, and lived a life of freedom, and seen strange lands, and lain in the grass looking long at the sky. Today, who needs to join the gypsies? I feel no fetters more than they. And I should thoroughly hate being a wet English gypsy, especially since in this unmusical land they have lost the knack of "singing in the rain."

One question after another June put to me about gypsies, and not a one could I answer, then. Since the summer I have read much but I am still far from wise. Where one man scolds ferociously because he loves his four walls and silver and soap and towels over-well, and therefore would drive any who love them less from the very face of the earth, another rhapsodizes because he hates his own ways too much. Any people who century upon century ago cast off the fetters which gall him must therefore be in his lost Paradise. George Borrow, strange

and heroic figure of these and other roads one hundred years ago, lived among the gypsies in these and other lands. Would his "Lavengro" and "Romany Rye" hold true for the gypsies of today? His Mumpers' Dingle is now the "Monmer Lane Ironworks" and Isopel Berners left him for America. . . . Gypsies have changed little in six hundred years, but they never had to weather such a hundred years as those since George Borrow, Lavengro, lived among them, the "gorgio" who understood them better than any Englishman. "Let the future of the world be what it may, Gipsydom is immortal." That was written very long ago. Perhaps there will be gypsies still when the speed of this life which does so much to make their days a curse is a matter for old wives' tales. But will they ever be able to recapture the past which set them so thoroughly apart—pride of race, of language, of independence such as exists with no people today? And that strange Romany code of morals which allowed a gypsy to sleep in peace after lying, trickery and thieving, but which placed the sex conduct of a girl or woman on a plane so strict that the suspicion of laxity entered no gypsy's mind.

"But suppose," George Borrow writes in "Romany Rye," "the person who followed you was highly agreeable, Ursula? A handsome officer . . . for example, all dressed up in Lincoln Green . . . ?"

"We makes no difference, brother; the daughters of the gypsy-father makes no difference; and what's more, sees none."

"Well, Ursula, the world will hardly give you credit for such indifference."

"What cares we for the world, brother? We are not of the world."

"But your fathers, brothers and uncles give you credit, I suppose, Ursula."

"Ay, ay, brother, our fathers, brothers and cokos gives us all manner of credit; for example, I am telling lies and dukkerin (fortunes) in a public-house where my batu or coko—perhaps both—are playing on the fiddle. . . but they are under no appre-

hension; and presently they sees the good looking officer get up and give me a wink, and I go out with him abroad, into the dark night, perhaps . . . well, my batu and my koko goes on fiddling just as if I were six miles off asleep in the tent. . . .”

“They know they can trust you, Ursula?”

“Ay, ay, brother; and, what’s more, I knows I can trust myself. . . .”

But even in George Borrow’s day he quotes that colorful and cunning Jasper Petulengro as saying: “Brother, we Romans shall always stick together as long as our *chies* (women) stick fast to us.”

“Do you think they always will, Jasper?”

“Can’t say, brother; nothing lasts forever. Romany *chies* are Romany *chies* still, though not exactly what they were sixty years ago . . . I tell you what, brother, if ever gypsism breaks up, it will be owing to our *chies* having been bitten by that mad puppy they calls gentility . . .”

If there are over twelve thousand gypsies in England there are many we did not see. I envied none we saw and I found myself leaning toward that suspicion of them only the presence of belongings invokes in our possessive and therefore cowardly breasts. Always we were meeting gypsies on the loneliest of roads. There would be a band of them, only two of us. What if we got a puncture, as one can, and does? I saw them making off with the contents of our open and unprotected back seat and probably all our cash. It shames me to admit such imaginings. What would gypsies want with the rare chattels we were traveling with? Can you see them fighting covetously for our raincoats and guide books and maps, and June’s diary, labored over through many a scribbling hour? As to money, not that we ever carried much but travelers’ checks, and not what the world calls much of them, still it would have been an inconvenience and sorrow to have one’s money removed from one needlessly on a deserted Welsh road, when we knew so very well just how to spend every shilling of it, and not a one to spare. Yet gypsies would know just how to spend it, too.

We got not one puncture all summer and nothing but smiles from gypsies.

"How do they live? What do they eat?" June fussed no end over gypsies.

They have managed to eat and live close to five hundred years in England, "where the poor have always worked so hard for so little." Therefore why shouldn't the English feel more than annoyed that for those five hundred years not a farm nor a factory held a gypsy for an hour? The women tell fortunes—and if people pay to have their fortunes told (and what better news than that we may be getting something for nothing!) who is in a position to look askance at the teller? The men fuss a bit with pots and pans and mend this and that, trade a horse or a donkey, and in gayer lands they turn music and dancing to profitable account. . . . So much for their honorable callings. The world is very full of callings not so honorable, and if gypsies come by food and clothing without honest toil, they use their wits in a way which, if only exercised on a larger scale, might get streets named after them. . . . At least this their most vehement disparager must grant: to the gypsy life in its gypsy fullness is what counts. How they come by the upkeep of that life is only incidental.

From the ancient ~~Byzantine Empire~~, no one knows when, they started to wander into almost every land on earth. No race has suffered more persecutions, has been looked upon as more unwelcome—and yet here they are camping contentedly on the English downs, trudging and driving the Welsh roads, up to all their age-old tricks, held together by their age-old loyalties and customs. For us who speed by pityingly, accusingly, scornfully, the gypsy feels more pity and more scorn . . . and doubtless never worries his mind with accusations. He knows more of satisfaction with this world, even the wet misty songless English world, than they who would rid the earth of him because he scorns to sell the wind and sky and freedom for an alarm clock and a roof.

I have paid my respects to the gypsies and told almost all I know about them, which allows me to return to that heaven-sent day of July 15th when we drove from close to Craven Arms along the Onny to Bishop's Castle,—and if you go no further, drive that stretch, which isn't Wales at all. At Clun we connected with those fifteen miles or so up over Clun Forest, again wild moorland, until at the summit of the pass such a view stretched before our eyes as we had not yet seen in these isles. West it was as if we could behold all the dark mountains and the green valleys of Wales, east we looked away to England and her hills and dales. Then a long smooth coast down for miles and miles and miles, a literal coast. There was not a sound in the world, nor another human being abroad.

Down in the valley of the Severn lay Newtown, home of Sir John Pryce of Newtown Hall. Somehow one feels an obligation to one's fellow beings to pass on the story of Sir John Pryce which I found in Baring-Gould's "Book of North Wales." It is strange that his active and loyal heart has not become the subject of world-wide epics before this.

Sir John Pryce married his first cousin Elizabeth, who died in 1731. One day there came a terrific downpour, forcing the widower to take refuge under a tree, forcing Mary Morris, farmer's daughter, to take refuge under the same tree. Halting words about the weather . . . about love . . . about marriage. Whether because of unkind comments on her lowly station, or that she found her new position difficult, "or the fact that the first Lady Pryce was kept embalmed by the bedside, or perhaps all together combined to weigh on her spirits,"—she died of despondency after two years of married life.

The rest of the story I give more or less as Baring-Gould wrote it:

In July, 1741, the Rev. W. Felton, curate of Newtown, was dying, when, two days before his death, he received a long letter from Sir John Pryce, from which a few passages may be extracted:

"... I have abundant reason to believe that you will imme-

diately enter upon a happier state when you make an exchange, and I desire that you will do me the favor to acquaint my two Dear Wives, that I retain the same tender Affections and the same Honour and Esteem for their memories which I ever did for their persons, and to tell the latter, that I earnestly desire, if she can obtain the Divine permission, that she will appear to me, to discover the persons who have wronged her" and "which robbed her of her life and me of all my happiness in this world . . .

"Your Friend and Humble Servant

"Jon. Pryce".

Sir John wrote an elegy of a thousand lines on his second wife, in which he affirmed that with his latest breath he would "lisp Maria's name."

Ere long, however, he fell in love again, and this time with a widow, Eleanor Jones, and married her. But when the lady found the bodies of his two preceding wives embalmed, one on each side of the matrimonial bed, she absolutely refused to enter it, and ordered their burial "before she would supply their vocation." She also died, in 1748. Immediately Sir John wrote off to one Bridget Bostock, "the Cheshire Pythoness" . . .

"Madame,—Being very well informed by many creditable people that you have done several wonderful cures . . . why may not God enable you to raise the dead? . . . Now I have lost a wife whom I most dearly loved, and I entreat you for God Almighty's sake that you would be so good as to come here, if your actual presence is absolutely requisite, to raise up my dear wife . . . from the dead. Pray let me know by return of the Post, that I may send you a Coach and Six and Servants to attend you here, with orders to defray your expenses in a manner most suitable to your desires.

"Your unfortunate afflicted petitioner and hble servt.

"John Pryce."

Mrs. Bostock exerted all her miracle-working powers, but without effect.

Sir John remained inconsolable—for a while. But from his will, dated 1760 . . . it appears that he was then meditating a fourth marriage. He however died before it could take place.

In his will he speaks "of that dearest object of my lawful and best and purest worldly affections, my most dear and most entirely beloved intended wife, Margaret Harries . . . spinster."

Sir John was evidently a man who did not like to live alone. An embalmed wife was better than none, two embalmed wives better than one. A most dearly loved alive wife was better still. Persevering and affectionate Sir John.

Incidentally the large-hearted and well-intentioned Robert Owen was born in Newtown and lies buried in its churchyard.

From Newtown a further stretch of unforgettable road led over Caersws with its relics of Rome. Up a wild valley of rocks and trees and waterfalls, Welsh mountains on either side sheltered one small town, Carno, with its *Merchant of Aleppo Inn*. Over the divide and down the wooded glen of the Iâl we winged our way to where it meets the Dovey, and on down the lovely green valley of the Dovey to Machynlleth.

The late afternoon stretch from Gogarth to Aberdovey on the coast was bordered one side with steep cliffs, thickly wooded; the other with yellow sands and pools.

CHAPTER 12

TAL-Y-LLYN LAKE, WHICH DESERVES A CHAPTER ALL TO ITSELF



AT Aberdovey once again Fate stepped into our lives with a post-card. I stepped out of the car to help Fate along, and looked at a stand of cards in a shop beside the road. There must be some spot in Wales which we knew nothing about, where we should find just the inn in just the situation our hearts craved. When I stepped back into the car I knew exactly where we should sleep that night, for hadn't I bought a picture of a small fishing inn on a Welsh lake?

"How do you know it's any place near here?"

"The card wouldn't be for sale here if it weren't."

With time we located the very spot on the map and were off. We could pronounce the name of the Inn; we thought we could pronounce the name of the lake, but of course we learned modesty about such matters.

There are those who say the nine miles from Barmouth to Dolgelley are the loveliest in all Wales—no "perhaps." Some hold you should take it in one direction for its greatest beauties, some the other. But what about the drive from about Fairbourne to Dolgelley along the southern edge of the Barmouth Estuary? The rain stopped just as we reached Fairbourne; down went the top, and we drove over a tree-covered road, wooded hills rising steep right, the estuary and its further hills

left. . . . All my diary could do was to say "Oh, oh *goodness*." There was one clear headlong stream rushing over rocks and down under a stone bridge, so glorious I had to stop the car and lean on the bridge, and look now up stream, now down. Both banks were thickly wooded, and what standing on that bridge must be like when the rhododendrons and azaleas are in bloom leaves one breathless at even the imagined sight.

Through Dolgelley on up and up through woods, past gypsies, to the head of the pass. From there the view that meets the eyes! Cader Idris towers right, bare wild nameless (to us) mountains left, a white line of roadbed stretches down, down, down the valley to way below in the twilight our little grey Tal-y-Llyn Lake. Not a soul did we pass, not a house could we at first discern on the shores of that Welsh lake. But I had that post-card! We bore on to the left, the road closely skirting the water's edge, until in a bend at the further end of the lake we came upon the small Royal Tyncornel Hotel. The name was painted across the front in orange letters; there were orange curtains at the windows . . . and after five days it was all we could do to drag ourselves away.

Unless you have put up at a fisherman's or sportsman's inn of long standing, no words could describe its atmosphere, so different is it from any ordinary hotel. In the first place it upsets all your conceptions of British aloofness, for you are received into a family circle. The two fishing inns which stand out in memory are at Tal-y-Llyn in Wales and Bridge of Alford in Scotland. At both inns the same guests had been coming regularly, steadily, for—in one case forty years, in another thirty, others twenty, ten. . . . There was one big table in the dining room, upon which platters and bowls of delectable food were placed, and the guests served each other. Good Mr. P—— at Tal-y-Llyn carved for the whole table. Mrs. S—— served the vegetables, some one else sliced bread as it was needed, another poured tea. How could you sit aloof and uncommunicative and formal? The talk was mainly, of course, about fishing.

"Do you remember back in 1899. . . . Let's see, you weren't here that year, were you? But you were here the summer Mr. T—— caught that . . ."

"I came late that year—that was 1904. You had just gone. But I remember the time Colonel W. . . ."

In the midst of good-natured Mr. P——'s carvings for a hungry table Mrs. S—— turned her snappy black Canadian eyes upon him. (Mrs. S—— was a fisherwoman of Irish, Scots, English, Canadian catches of note.) "Tell the ladies about the time you went out in your night-shirt to help your brother land that trout."

Mr. P—— hacks a bit nervously at the joint and blushes. It is so easy to picture the cut Mr. P—— would make in a night-shirt, Mr. P—— being middle-aged and short and rugged and a London engineer of note. The ladies take to hilarity before Mr. P—— recovers enough to begin his tale. By the time he is through and everyone has had plenty of time to vision Mr. P—— being brotherly in the late hours rushing out in that night-shirt with a net in answer to family calls, the whole table is convulsed. Even Mr. P—— decides it must have been funny.

One of the stand-bys, who had fished in Tal-y-Llyn Lake for decades with that love in his heart which only a fellow-fisherman can comprehend, for a spot yielding trout with much coaxing, passed on to his heaven. How over-easy to picture a fisherman's heaven! He was a Londoner born and bred and in a manner of business, but his understanding wife rose to the occasion. She brought his body up into the Welsh mountains to the little age-old church beside Tal-y-Llyn Lake, and there it lies buried.

Five blissful days we spent cupped in by not-too-forbidding Welsh mountains beside a mile-and-a-quarter-long, a quarter-of-a-mile-wide Welsh lake, "all beyond my fairest dreams. . . . We are beside ourselves with joy and want to stay forever. . . . Trout promised for breakfast!" (Those Tal-y-Llyn breakfasts were enough to do a human rock-crusher twelve

hours.) The end of the second day: "Such a heaven of a spot! It rained a good part of the day—no matter. Most of the morning I read aloud to June while she knitted and then I fished, but first I helped Mrs. S—— fix lines, leaders, etc., with Mr. P——. Everyone so friendly here. . . . Wind and rain, fishing and hard rowing in a boat that weighed a ton, and me snarled or caught on boat or bank or something a good part of the time, but I loved it. After tea, more unsuccessful fishing in a gale and such labors pulling home! I thought my arms would unscrew from their sockets. . . . Delicious roast duck dinner, Mr. P—— carving. . . ."

And the evening of the third day: "This heavenly place! No rain today, so we made every moment count. I rowed and fished in the morning with no luck whatever except to enjoy myself. June climbed a mountain. Penalty of good weather: char-a-bancs and cars daring to ferret out our own 'sylvan nook.' What a selfish dog-in-the-manger nature makes of a person! Rowed and fished in afternoon, though my arms so sore and weary I could scarce pull an oar. Swell nabobs up for the day from Towyn or Dolgelley hire 'gillies,' which is a new one for me. Mrs. S—— is forever talking about gillies they had in Ireland and gillies they had in Scotland—it's 'caddy' for fishing. After tea I climbed June's mountain she came down so enthused about. Never had such a climb in my life! Actually the way up seemed as perpendicular as earth and rocks can be, without being at right angles to the world. But that's not the half. From a few feet after the climb started till the all-but-perpendicular stretch was by—and that was most of the mountain—one's feet practically never felt the earth,—you ascended heather! (and blueberries—a bite with every step!) Clutch heather above you, step up on another tough bunch of heather boughs, clutch . . . step . . . eat blueberries, clutch . . . step . . . blueberries,—and, way below the lake. Came along not quite so perpendicular a stretch on short grass, and sheep looking at you so accusingly, a body with a guilty conscience would dive a thousand feet down into the lake. . . . Boggy bits, where

you oozed and splushed . . . and the top at last, with views over all creation, and gales and sheep. Coming down that perpendicular mountain I like to a' died. Used every muscle I hadn't used for thirty years—some the Matterhorn never touched—and in a bran' new way. Ached from head to foot and could scarcely stand up on the level. One heel lost and recovered, the other lost. Just time to wash and prepare for dinner—such food and such amounts! Spent evening talking by fire, especially with the charming London architect and his family who climbed Cader Idris today. I'd hoped to do same tomorrow if weather allows, but am so sore all over I dunno'. What shoes could I wear?"

The evening of the fourth day: "Rain and rain and rain and gales and cold, yet how we love it, and would stay weeks! . . . June adores it here and knits by the little fire in the little dark, orange-curtained 'parlor' and we read and write—and eat, and love the lazy raining hours.

"One rare treat tonight—wonderful Welsh singing in the smoke room under hams and bacons, and did we love that! The singers were slate workers over from the quarries for a drink and a bit of sociability. The daughter of the house played the piano, one man tooted (I was happier when now and then his breath gave out) and the rest sang. Many solos by a fine voice—what an unusual rhythm and tempo to some Welsh songs! Verses and verses and verses of strange words, but never enough. Twice they sang 'The March of the Men of Harlech' for us—ah, to have heard that ringing through and around the hams and bacons in Welsh! Mr. P—— treated the roomful to drinks all 'round, which produced more song. Everyone rattled Welsh in between, except the guests who were there 'on invitation' as it were, because I'd mentioned longing to hear some Welsh singing.

"When voices and toots grew too weary (fortunately toots had weakened some time before voices) we 'guests' went back to our own little fire and I got Mr. P—— started on stories of the region. . . ."

You wouldn't think that sparse bit of a community could furnish tales needing hours for the telling. From our hotel one house could be seen, the fairly new rose-covered grey stone vicarage across the lake. A vicarage at Tal-y-Llyn! Did anyone ever go to church? Oh three or four were usually on hand. They were all very orthodox however about not fishing on Sundays! The church itself stood a bit higher than the road, around a bend at the very end of the lake. I inspected its graves one soppy afternoon and all but drowned in the high drenched grass. Try reading a batch of Welsh tombstones and you'll see double for a day. One slab I could read and a strange tale must have lurked between the lines. Somebody Lee fought alongside her husband, so it read, in a Russian war. And why was a Lee brought 'way back and buried in a tiny Welsh mountain churchyard? No one seemed to know.

The other building on the lake was a rival hotel, across the bridge over the river Dysynni which rushed out of our lake beside the church. The feuds which went on between the Royal Tyncornel and the Pen-y-Bont! The Tyncornel Hotel owned all fishing rights to the lake, the Pen-y-Bont to the river. Time had been within the memory of living man when mutual favors had been granted—your guest may fish in the river if mine may fish in the lake. . . . Came the Lord Sheriff or some such dignitary from London to stay at the Pen-y-Bont and fish the river. Our hotel asked permission for a guest to fish the river. Gladly sir, only not while the Lord Sheriff is in these parts. We are saving the fish of the Dysynni for his Lordship alone! (Indeed a Lord Sheriff or whatever he was does not appear over Welsh passes every day. Even a fish knows that.)

Ah, me—that was years ago. Since then no Pen-y-Bont guest has been allowed to fish in the lake, no Tyncornelist may cast upon the waters of the Dysynni. Thirty years ago a Mr. B—— found himself at the Pen-y-Bont for a night or so, Mr. B—— being no fisherman, but merely on his way to see a bit of Wales. He has been at the Pen-y-Bont ever since (June and I sent understanding glances to each other). For some reason



ROYAL HOTEL
AT CAPEL
CURIG, WALES

LLANBERIS
PASS



CONWAY CASTLE AND TELFORD'S BRIDGE

he deems it incumbent upon himself never to step foot inside the Tyncornel Hotel. Mr. P—— is a good friend of Mr. B——'s. Every season Mr. P—— saunters around the bend in the road to have his daily smoke and nip with Mr. B——, but Mr. B—— never crosses our threshold, never.

There was chuckling over the English lady who appeared one summer with her maid and her trunks, having overheard some ardent fishing disciple speak his contented mind on the Royal Tyncornel Hotel (and perhaps, who knows? being somewhat misled by the "Royal"). She paid for a week, considering it her obligation since she had reserved rooms for the summer, but she fled the next day.

A wee church, two very small hotels, the vicarage, which no fisherman appears to notice—that is all. Yet year after year back the faithful come, content to fish all day and catch two trout, or six if it is a big day. Rain of course—everyone has tales to tell about the various times the lake rose over the road with the added waters from heaven. And we were lucky enough to be taken in as part of it all for five short days.

The last afternoon the rain eased long enough for me to take my still stiff and still sore limbs on the most lovely of walks around the lake, the mountains pouring down torrents of water in heavy and roaring, or brazen little noisy, rushing streams and cascades. Mr. P—— was out fishing, Mr. B—— plying the oars. Mrs. S—— caught one trout, the entire haul for the day. Everyone was happy, except a very plump pink man who arrived that afternoon with a shorter plump man whom he called "dear." They caught nothing and were cold and wet and thought they'd go back to Yorkshire where, they claimed, it hadn't rained for weeks. (The worst floods of the summer were in Yorkshire.)

Sunday after our last trout breakfast—not a one did I supply the board—and in the pouring rain we reluctantly severed ourselves from that corner of the world we so loved. The real name of the lake, though one never hears it, is Mwyngil, Lake of the Pleasant Retreat.

And may I suggest for the benefit of anyone lucky enough to have a bit of time and a car on his hands in Wales that there are four ways of reaching Tal-y-Llyn Lake, and all of them should be used. Follow up the Dovey over Dinas-Mawddwy to the Cross Foxes Inn, and down over the pass to the lake; from Lachyncleth over Corris; from Towyn over Abergyndlwyn; and the less used road (I don't know now what its state may be) which follows the Dysynni more closely from north of Towyn to the lake. Up that secluded valley are the remains of a castle Edward I visited in the thirteenth century.

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CHAPTER 13

A CERTAIN RAINY WELSH SUNDAY AND THE SINNING OF A
LEFT REAR WHEEL; PLUS A CERTAIN RAINY WELSH MONDAY,
WITH PASSES AND CASTLES



AS for that rainy Sunday, we took the road we came on, up, up over the pass, and down the wooded, fairly steep road to Dolgelley. . . . Verily does one never know from one moment to the next what the Lord has in store for mortals. Verily is there such a thing as Parker Luck. On what strange and steep and deserted roads had we not been traveling, and at what various speeds—and yet our good left hind wheel waited until we were slowly turning around on the main street of Dolgelley, because we missed our road north, to come off. There is not much to be said in favor of losing a wheel any place, but certainly, since for the ten days since its unscrewing it was on the books to be, it must have lain awake nights planning the most comfortable spot for all concerned. We were even far enough over to the side of the road that cars might pass. Oh we do things so well. There I left June knitting in a drunken looking car—a Hispano-Suiza would look seedy and awry if a back hind wheel were leaning forlorn against a somewhat distant stone wall—while I sought aid.

Again luck was with us. Wales is a land where Sunday is Sunday—not so long since men were known to walk their horses

on the Sabbath, and many a Welsh garage, and perhaps only one in the town, is locked for the day. According to an old guide book of 1776 Dolgelley would have been a sad place for accidents in the past. "But how was I disgusted on my arrival at the interior parts of this miserable place! There is no street in it; you pass from dungeon to dungeon through a multiplicity of hog yards." Today "it is chiefly noted as a tourist resort, owing to its singularly beautiful situation." It boasts hotels of merit, and what is more, an almost palatial garage. With a typically Welsh owner.

Either because it was the Sabbath, or just generally, he growled into his chin in English difficult to understand that he didn't think he could do anything about our car for the day, and then on second thought decided he probably would never be able to do anything about it. Something personal or domestic may have gone wrong in his life. But I had all the Sunday gal-lants of Dolgelley, the kind who used to smell of horses, on my side. Finally, with the help of such extraneous interest and a boy who worked in the place, a large antique car was filled with enough tools to manufacture a new Austin out of scraps, and off we rode to the scene of our humiliation. June had her embarrassed nose buried in her knitting, as if inflicted with double astigmatism or some eye short-coming, thinking thereby to hide herself from the group of Sunday lads who had collected for lack of anything else to do. The whole town was in a chastened and communicative frame of mind since a youth on a motorcycle coming down a hill just behind us had dashed out his brains because of weak brakes.

The wheel was adjusted where wheels belong; we drove back to the garage for further tightenings, and were off toward Barmouth on that most beautiful stretch of road in Wales, somewhat subdued ourselves. When my mind would swerve off to think of the youth on the motorcycle, very, very subdued. Trying to admire the scenery we became all too aware of distressing odors—something had been screwed so tight we were smoking. We crawled back to the garage, to the disgust of the

owner who had never wanted to have anything to do with us in the first place. As for us, we hardly knew what to think about our beloved Austin. Did it feel as sensitive and regretful about the whole affair as we, or had it a small yellow streak of its own? We gave it the benefit of the doubt and mingled the shocks that flesh is heir to with what we wished to consider must have been its own metallic chagrin.

This good Sabbath was one of those days when it poured without a moment's ceasing from dawn to dusk. Even so that Dolgelley-Barmouth stretch of woods, streams, estuary, mountains swathed in mists were beyond words glorious. Even so a fishing inn we passed beside a roaring stream in Llanbedr, the Hotel Victoria, looked so inviting we had to turn back and have tea and warm our cold toes. It would be a delightful spot for a stay, with its garden of gay flowers and lawns bordering the river. Even so, Edward I's Harlech Castle, towering four-square on its rock above the marshes gave us a thrill—perhaps it looked even more forbidding in the mist and downpour.

The road over the Aberglaslyn Pass to Beddgelert is another of the famed Welsh ways, cliffs, roaring torrents, trees, mountains. Yet I would have no one miss the less-famed drive up the Dwyryd lagoon and along the river to Maentwrog in the lovely Vale of Ffestiniog—and Maentwrog is a spot to consider as headquarters. Across the Dwyryd below a wooded cliff is the attractive Tan-y-Bwlch Hotel, the kind you can recommend to those who might flounce out of lesser inns in a huff.

But then there is Beddgelert, and of course one should also headquarter in Beddgelert, tucked away in the midst of trees and crags. "Completely embosomed in mountains," it straggles along its quite ferocious, at least in rainy weather, streams.

It is a steadying experience to read old guide books; I indulge in it every so often to keep me from soaring too sentimentally about the past. In my feelings of outrage over this and that perpetration of our modern industrial era, it is easy to fall back upon the theory that to have beheld the world in olden days must have been akin to rambling Paradise, now lost.

Take Beddgelert—at some moment in the last two hundred years it must have been the Perfect Spot. But suppose one reached it too long before? There would have been no inn at all. Private lodgings had been recommended to the author of an early guide book. “The violent stench did not prevent my looking in—the savages sat lapping their oatmeal and milk and the swine were attendant at the table. . . . I determined to hazard being lost in the night rather than to be suffocated in this nauseous dungeon. . . .” He finally found a roof under which he was able to procure “oatmeal, bread, porter and stinking cheese.”

And if one grieves that modern means of locomotion are clattering roads and countryside, and sighs for the pre-petrol era before the days of tourists from overseas, and trippers from nearby towns, and tear and rush and noise, a bit of reading helps steady the heart here too. Earlier Welsh roads were such that even guides hired to accompany travelers on their perilous journeys from hamlet to hamlet often landed in bogs, or no place at all, and night coming on. To turn south and east for a moment to the cultured and civil haunts of Sussex: In December 1703 no less than King Charles III of Spain slept at our Petworth in Sussex, on his way to Windsor, where Prince George of Denmark rode to meet him by desire of the Queen. “We set out at six in the morning, by torchlight, to go to Petworth, and did not get out of the coaches (save only when we overturned or stuck fast in the mire) till we arrived at our journey’s end. ’Twas a hard service for the Prince to sit fourteen hours in the coach that day without eating anything, and passing through the worst ways I ever saw in my life. We were thrown but once indeed in going, but our coach, which was the leading one, and His Highness’ body coach, would have suffered very much if the nimble boors of Sussex had not frequently poised it or supported it with their shoulders, from Godalming almost to Petworth, and the nearer we approached the Duke’s house, the more inaccessible it seemed to be. The last nine miles of the way cost us six hours time to conquer them, and indeed

we had never done it if our good master had not several times lent us a pair of horses out of his own coach, whereby we were enabled to trace out the way for him." The account ends "I saw the Prince no more till I found him at supper at Windsor, for there we were overturned (as we had been once before the same morning) and broke our coach; my Lord Delaware had the same fate; and so had several others." Hah, King of Spain, what would you have thought of the way we purred along in our Austin Seven? (Don't let him know about the wheel. It was merely some mistake of the sixpenny garage man back in Derbyshire, and at that it stayed on ten days.)

As one moves on up to an 1835 guide book roads must have greatly improved, for there is one heading: "Caution against Jumping out of Carriages when Horses are Running Away"; though there was a Welsh road we took with unconcern which in those days seemed uninviting: "a more horrific situation it is impossible to depict . . . for every moment threatens unavoidable destruction."

Yet I should have liked to visit Beddgelert about 1835—"An Inn, (singular) called the Goat, standing detached from the village, affords excellent accommodation to the tourist." Today—"Beddgelert, perhaps the most delightful village in Wales, is famed for its sylvan and pastoral situation, at the confluence of two clear mountain streams, the Colwyn and the Glaslyn, in a basin amid rocky heights and wind-swept fells." So does a prosaic Muirhead write of Beddgelert. "Although the summer bustle of coach and tourist traffic is considerable, the place (with its capital hotels) [list given but not all] retains the air of a village. . . ." We found a big, spotless, delightful room in a spotless new house, the Angorfa, so inexpensive we treated ourselves to the luxury of a fire by which June knit while I read aloud. Let it rain. My plaintive diary ends: "Is there a chance in the world these days of rain may be at an end???" (My dear, my dear, let me omnipotently inform you they are to keep up for four more weeks.) (st.)

Of course if the world were really managed on a strictly

moral and ethical basis, Beddgelert (pronounced Bethgelert) should be a scorched mound of stricken ruins. Its prosperity is in part at least founded on a lie! Everyone who tells or writes the story of Beddgelert always begins with "Of course everybody knows the legendary story of Llewelyn the Great and his faithful hound, left in charge of his sleeping child." Father returns—hound bloody—hound must have killed child—Llewelyn slays hound.

"Ah, what was then Llewelyn's pain!
For now the truth was clear;
The gallant hound the wolf had slain
To save Llewelyn's heir."

So, Beddgelert means "grave of Gelert" the faithful, "the gallant" hound. All very well. But the eighteenth-century proprietor of the Goat Hotel, knowing the mind and ways of man, and making the rounds of his too-deserted rooms, proceeded to raise stones over non-existent dog's bones, and the pilgrimage of the curious never ceases. Drop your luggage, or your boxes, at the now enlarged Royal Goat Hotel ("very full in summer") and dash up the path to Gelert's grave before you've signed the register. Other hotels have been built to hold the overflow. The small Angorfa household, who would no doubt lay their heads upon the block before they'd add an unwarranted fourpence to the bill, if asked whether Gelert really lies buried beneath the stones (every book you pick up blazons to the world the hypocrisy of the eighteenth-century Goat proprietor) look at you with open honest eyes, and in their broken English ask if it could possibly be untrue when it has been believed for so long?

The next day "Weather vile, yet was this a day! How put it all down? Nicest English couple at breakfast traveling likewise in a Baby Austin, but, horrors, an enclosed one. And they're freezing to death these days too, for all that. . . . Then June and I off to Car-nár-von. We drive along, one exclamation after another over our love of Wales. We must come back, we must!" June wrote: "Mom and I almost drove ourselves to ruins over



DERWENTWATER



ENNERDALE LAKE

the *perfect* sites for houses. Small rocky hills abruptly rose from the valley, and trees presented themselves in just the perfect places to shelter a house. Mom and I built at least two hundred houses that day. We arrived at Carnarvon amidst new records for rain but even then, the castle could not be absolutely deglorified. 'Such stuff as dreams are made on' would be an excellent sub-title for Carnarvon Castle." And then she bursts into her rather frequent momentary contact with the Creator: "God bless Edward I for having the imagination to build something like that. We took our lives in our hands as we got out of the Austin and battled our way up the hill to the castle. It *was* raining."

It was Carnarvon Castle "where the wife of Edward I was brought to bed of Edward II." His father could thereby produce his infant heir when the Welsh begged for a prince "who had been born in Wales and spoke no English." Forever after, the first son of the King of England has been the Prince of Wales. It is one of the great castles of the British Isles with its stern grey embattled walls eight to ten feet thick enclosing three acres of castle and courts, its thirteen polygonal towers, most of them with "finger turrets," or look outs, its massive double-towered gate once guarded by four portcullis. On two sides is water, the rest was once protected by its moat.

We bore on—"floated out of Carnarvon," June wrote, and for hours on end beheld such scenery as man must journey to Wales to bless his eyes and life and memory with. One of the most awesome and unforgettable sights I have ever seen in all my travels, had it not been for the weather, would have appeared merely as a tremendous blight upon the landscape,—the slate quarries across Llyn Padarn, the larger of the twin lakes of Llanberis. In the mist and rain that side of the lake, slashed into its grey-blue tiers and terraced back in giant falls of wet, loose grey-blue slate towering two thousand feet into their mist shrouded heights, rose steep from the slate colored water like other-world magic conjured up by a bloodless Alad-

din. With a little play to the imagination it could have been terrifying.

It was such a region—her home indeed was on the shores of this lower Llyn Padarn—which served as background for Margaret 'uch Evan, who finally got her fill of this life in 1801 at the age of a hundred and five. Maybe the region breeds the like today, but as a rule the too-hasty traveler hears of human oddities only after they are long dead and have gotten into print. The more's the pity for the haste. Margaret was "the greatest hunter, shooter, fisher of her time. . . . She killed more foxes in one year than all the confederate hunts do in ten; rode stoutly, and was Queen of the Lake; fiddled excellently, and knew all the old British music; did not neglect the mechanical arts, for she was a good joiner; and at the age of seventy was the best wrestler in the country. . . . She had a maid of congenial qualities; but death, that mighty hunter, at last earthed this faithful companion. Margaret was also blacksmith, shoemaker, boat-builder, and maker of harps. She shod her own horses, made her own shoes. . . . At length she gave her hand to the most effeminate of her admirers, as if predetermined to maintain the superiority which nature had bestowed on her."

She needed one hundred and five years to get in all her activities. God probably put off the matter of her earthly end as long as possible, anticipating the havoc her energy might bring to the peaceful haunts of Heaven.

The road from Llanberis, ascending to the pass, traverses "the wildest valley in Wales." On either side that rainy day rose towering walls of rock and crags, water raging down every crevice to join the mad rain-swelled torrent beside the road. Masses of boulders and debris from the black mountains forced the road to turn now right, now left, to reach the head of the V-shaped defile and the Pass itself.

Down the other side the road descended the bare valley of the Gwryd, mist-wrapped mountains keeping here their distance, sloping to the swift stream with more comfort. Ahead, down deep in the valley lay the Lake of Mymbyr. Just above

the lake, eased and sheltered by its trees, stands one of the famous old eighteenth century coaching inns of Wales, the Royal Hotel, where the "Ancient Briton," coach on the Holyhead main road, stopped over night. The thirty-odd miles from here on to Holyhead meant fourteen hours driving ahead! At Capel Curig just beyond the hotel we turned left for the road along the Nant Ffrancon which heads over its bleak pass east of Llyn Ogwen, the Glydyr mountains standing guard. Tryfan, one of the most austere and dramatic of Welsh summits, loomed dark and wet above the road, bounded down both sides with mountains capped in mist. Had there been less rain we should have taken the short path across the road from Lake Ogden leading to the small wild Idwal at the foot of Tryfan, and the sight of that one shouldn't miss. Past yet more massive chilling slate quarries (but I like the names usage has given the split slabs—"duchess" for the biggest, "countess" next size, "ladies" next size), and avoiding Bangor, we turned along the coast to Conway.

After such scenes of rugged misty grandeur as our eyes had been beholding, we were in less resigned mood than normal for a town, though prepared to find Conway converting us a bit to civilization. It did not, it did not! Since the weather allowed the thousands "summering" along Welsh beaches to gain small comfort from the sea, they were flocking in droves, herds, swarms to Conway. The place was one jam of char-a-bancs and trippers. Conway Castle is held by many to be the finest in all the British Isles, some say in all Europe. We could not bear to elbow ourselves into the mass edging their way up the steps. You can imagine how another of Conway's sights was faring—if the great thirteenth century castle was crowded, what was the state of the "smallest house in Great Britain?" We looked upon the oldest house in Conway, and fascinating Plas Mawr, the "Great Mansion," a Tudor house which entertained Elizabeth more than once. And then the sun shone. We drove over Telford's impressive suspension bridge mindful of the backward view toward the towering castle with its fifteen

foot walls and turrets, yet never a sigh for more of Conway.

There is a breath-taking drive blasted out of the rock around Great Ormes Head. On the day we took it such a wind raged around the cliffs, it all but sent our little Austin after the seagulls.

We had planned to spend the night in Bettws-y-coed, driving up the green valley of the Conway to where that attractive village spreads its hotel after hotel—and very grand hotels, to our notions—along the narrow-wooded river banks. But bless our hearts, the sun was shining, it was, it was! True, it was getting well along in the day, and we had driven many, many miles, but the three of us, which included the Austin, were one in the idea of going yet farther. We *must* see those passes of the morning's rain and mist in the clear late afternoon sunlight! So we sped, shooting along Welsh mountain roads as fast as we dared, to give heaven no time for further misdeeds. It couldn't be that rain would ever stop again for long. On up that valley of the Gwryd we drove from Capel Curig, in this direction the lake to our left and Snowdon itself, for a moment, far ahead. The outline of mountains we were able only to guess at that morning now stood sharp-cut against the grey-pink sky. We could have founded an abbey for gratitude to God . . . and especially because of that sunset drive down the narrow wild boulder-strewn pass to the village of Llanberis, its lakes glistening ahead. Now our slate quarries were indeed a cruel wound upon the cold hard mountains.

We would sleep in one of Llanberis' fine, and empty, hotels. We looked at the sky. We looked at the big deserted hotels. Days of rain make a conservative and home body of even the forever rained on Briton. There was still a clear sunset glow to the world. "Let's drive up the pass again and stay at that hotel on the top of the world!" So, for the third time that day, we made that magnificent defile ours, twice with the top of the car down, and turned in frozen, blown, grateful indeed for the great kindness shown us by heaven, to the Gorphwysfa Inn at the head of the Pass, in Welsh "the resting place."

The resting place—rest for climbers within by the fire, polished brasses and coppers shining, but the inn itself must never know peace day or night, for the struggle to hold to the rocks. The windows are built like a ship's, to keep out the gales, nor are the gales kept out. Yet that inn is one of our starred abodes. There were just two guests besides ourselves, two mountaineers, ardent and courageous—or foolish—enough to be climbing in such weather, and lo! was one not just out of Harvard Law School (and his English such that I took him at once for Oxford) and the other also from our last part of the world? They had climbed everything when you couldn't see ten feet ahead and even with such handicaps shared all our enthusiasm for Wales. It was their first Welsh experience; it was not to be their last.

June, I noted vaguely, had mysteriously withdrawn from conversation which had animated her considerably,—indeed we were both right happy to “meet up” with such pleasant countrymen. Something, it appeared on investigation, had Come Into Her Life, and stayed in it for the rest of the summer—P. G. Wodehouse. Our new Boston friends were wild Wodehouse enthusiasts. A book had been carelessly left on the table; June picked it up and “from the first word I was not of this world.” The Harvard Law student insisted, with the ardor of one who has made a convert to a cause near and dear, that June keep the book. Jeeves accompanied us for the rest of the summer. There were moments when I could have given Mr. Wodehouse a piece of my mind for the part he played in our lives. June would egg me on to stop at every church and wayside landmark so that she could snatch Jeeves from behind her seat and gurgle “till the words so magnificently put together by P. G. Wodehouse were but one jumble of hieroglyphics because of the tears.” He reigned supreme till amidst Scotch heather Mary Queen of Scots supplanted Jeeves.

The next morning, waved off by the Americans, and still no rain, we repeated yet again, with ever new delights, the road to Capel Curig; and on past Bettws-y-Coed. The lovely

valley of the Upper Conway we had to ourselves, wooded, winding between crags and mountains, the river losing no time below the road, and the two of us in a state of irrepressible glee over the world in general. There are times when it is not so much a case of where you deliberately "take off your skin and dance around in your bones," but as if your skin were curling off you for the churning happiness of your insides, and soon your bones would go prancing and rattling over the treetops, since earth on such a day could never hold them.

After Pentre-Foelas there came the weirdest stretch of country we were to see all summer—miles across the wildest, most shorn and desolate region imaginable, a fifteen-hundred-foot-high waste of bog and peatland. West the eye could see as far as Snowdon's peaks, misty against the clear sky, east to the desolate heather-clad Mynydd Hiraet-hog, its squat summit only some two hundred feet higher than the road. I'd not dare guess the miles opened out north, south, east and west, yet not a tree, not a house, not a human being to be seen, only the sky, the brown grassy earth, tarns, boggy streams, the tops of mountains far to the west, and the road ahead. It was a land forgotten by God and man. Never talk to us about the sinister effect, the loneliness of Dartmoor! If you have an enemy, wish him a puncture on that Welsh road! "The region is one that, at some time long past, has been worn down and has then been raised up once more as a plateau to receive afresh the untiring attack of wind and weather, streams and ice." The long weary eons of that solitude. . . .

In the midst of such desolation we passed a weird-looking woman carrying a box. Had she been going in our direction we should have felt constrained, of course, to find room for her somehow, but the wild look of her glaring face made us sigh with unchristian relief that her ways and ours ran opposite. She gave the last uncanny touch to that region.

Denbigh . . . Ruthin . . . along a sheltered road in its soft green wooded valleys until it lifted high to bare green moors again, only to let itself down in a breath-taking horse-shoe

loop, with views into the vale far below, so lovely a car must needs stop for the sight. Down in the valley of the Dee we found Llangollen made famous not so much by the beauty of its situation, which many hold high, as by the "Ladies of Llangollen," who come very much alive if you look at the eighteenth century picture of them in their library. Bless me, what a stir they caused back in their day, when as representatives of "the greatest feudal House, that of Ormond, and the most powerful political family in Ireland, respectively," they forswore the "brilliant, rollicky, superficial, pre-Union Irish world," and "eloped," as an old guide book states it, to Llangollen. Not one soul knew their whereabouts but a faithful servant (faithful indeed!—out of her savings she bought Plâs Newydd, the house in Llangollen, and left it to the two exotic, eccentric, funny old ladies when she died). Fifty years the two friends lived tucked away in the Vale of Llangollen, abjuring the world in 1776 when Lady Emily Butler was forty and Miss Ponsonby thirty. One can imagine that it took some time for the pop-eyed inhabitants of a sleepy Welsh village to get used to their costumes, which remained constant for the fifty years.

It was a certain actor who wrote:

"Oh! such curiosities! I was nearly convulsed. I could scarcely get on for the first ten minutes after my eye caught them. As they are seated there is not one point to distinguish them from men: the dressing and powdering of the hair; their well-starched neck-cloths; the upper part of their habits, which they always wear even at a dinner party, made precisely like men's coats; and regular beaver black hats. They looked exactly like two respectable superannuated old clergymen."

By which it can be seen that as Telford's feats of engineering put Llangollen on the highroad to Dublin, the world the ladies had scorned for thirty years found them out again, and many were the famed who sat in their book-lined "saloon,"—in fact the good ladies came to feel a bit huffy if anyone of name and consequence passed them by. Few did. They were the great sight of the region in their day; the gabled and carved

Plâs Newydd, "an elegant little cottage" largely built by them, is the great sight of the region today.

It will always be understandable to us why anyone should choose Llangollen as a retreat from a no longer fancied world. It is the last appealing Welsh memory of what began as almost the most lovely, and soon after Llangollen turned into the most terrible, drive of our summer. Wild Wales, never look far across your north-east border!

Hardly had we left Llangollen than the rain began, but RAIN, I'm telling you. Hour after hour after hour it poured. But it was not the rain,—it had rained in Wales. Mile after mile we drove through the most unattractive country surely in all England. The swish of a wind shield wiper will always bring back belching smoke stacks, dreary cobbled streets, barren bitten lands between. I know the "Black Country" did not start at once with the rain. There was Wrexham where Elihu Yale lies buried—

"Born in America, in Europe bred,
In Africa travell'd, and in Asia wed.
Much good, some ill he did, so hope all's even
And that his soul thro' mercy's gone to heaven!"

There was Chester, but such a deluge we could scarce bear to get out of the car to run across the street to the bank for our mail. We had planned to stay two days in Chester. Beyond Chester we had sad tea in a sad, wet, leaky tea-place. Where-upon began the chimneys, forever chimneys against the horizon, then the dreary towns at the foot of the chimneys, then the chimneys of the next town. Bedraggled workers shuffled along the gloomy cobbled streets. . . . And that very day we had started from the Resting Place at the head of a wild Welsh pass. . . . Down to this—*this*. . . . The sins of this our day and age! And from all directions traffic . . . traffic. . . .

It began to get dark. Should we perhaps make for the coast and a seaside hotel for the night? We located Morecombe near Lancaster, "a popular seaside resort with a wide sandy beach."

Where did the Irish Sea and Morecombe Bay end and the drenched and all but equally wet town of Morecombe begin? It was too drear and cold and desolate. We turned back to the main highway and kept on, I not sure but what that windshield wiper might drive me raving. Twenty-one miles to Kendall—can we keep going without the car soaking apart? Surely some pleasing corner for weary frozen heads to find warmth and rest will appear before Kendall. My hands were growing stiff.

Here's a place! It must be lovely country by daylight—Levens Hall Hotel. We drove down the long driveway. One look at the house filled me with misgivings, but we were getting desperate. A brass buttoned, white shirtfronted male person opened the door; a few lost guests were hugging a fire in tuxedos and evening dresses. The rain had soaked into our Austin so that my stiff wet bones left little pools about the parquet floors. The shock of the price quoted was such that I immediately forgot it and staggered back to June in time to spare a liveried minion the trouble of removing any more of our luggage.

On to Kendall—ten solid hours of driving, time off only to read our mail and drink that leaky tea, and well over two hundred miles of going. Dear God, a bed in Kendall!

Kendall was terrible.

From one point of view you can reason that anyone in the weary, wet, cold state of ourselves should have welcomed any shelter for the night. On the other hand anyone as weary, wet and cold as we were needed sorely not only a roof but some modicum of warmth and cheer. I was not going to put us up in frayed and gloomy mold if I could help it.

Then it came to me that back about five miles we had passed an attractive looking small hotel beside the road. Why in the world hadn't we stopped there anyhow? Back we drove—and the joy and relief and comfort of that spotless cheery hospitable place! Every care was thrown overboard in one second and we hugged ourselves and each other at such luck.

A fire in a gay chintzed living-room, hot cocoa, the most delicious since we had left home, and all so cheap we could hardly believe our ears. Then and there we decided to make the Heversham Hotel in Heversham our headquarters for the Lake District. It was a good world.

CHAPTER 14

THE LAKE DISTRICT, MORE EVENTFUL TO PARKERS THAN POETIC



LET the rain wash the Black Country into the sea if it will, and, from the way it came down the day we drove through, it may have. I, of course, desire no casualties, and I have no brief to read before Parliament on how the inhabitants, undrowned, will earn their livings once their chimneys and mills and mines are deep under water. But if there is justice in heaven, shouldn't rain cease short of Westmorland and the Lakes? I give ear to prophetic minds which claim that the day will come when man can control the weather. It leaves me cold. By that time the chances are most of the earth will be a Black Country; we shall have brought the blessings of modern large scale production to the entire world, and who will care whether it rains or shines? Not I. Nor did we care that first day in the Lake District.

"Today cold and steadily pouring, so nice little hotel kept fire going all day for us two in its attractive gay chintzed lounge and there we sat and read and wrote and June knit and we talked. And such a delicious high tea! It was one restful, peaceful, happy day. After late tea, rain actually ceased and I went for a quiet queer walk along flat Lancashire farm roads, little used, to the river Kent, and along that on no path at all but in soaking grass to where I finally came out near a remarkable

old manor house, Levens Hall. It was so good to walk thus when one speeds by so much of the world in a car. I discovered jerky little red-billed ducks in an all but hidden ditch, and wild flowers and birds galore. Always I was on the look out for old Roman gate-posts. No luck, but ever hopeful. Explored across the river from Levens Hall and caught a sight of trout! Back on a path beside the main road. . . . More reading and writing by the fire." That was all I wrote in my diary that late afternoon. Then I looked out the window and realized there would be a sunset to color the heavens later that evening. By now I had no faith whatever in tomorrows—why should I not grasp this miracle and see at least one lake when there was no rain? June preferred Jeeves by the fire, so alone I fared forth in the partially dried out Austin, after seven o'clock.

Not even Wordsworth, I don't believe, for all that he could write lines "Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty," ever beheld his Lakeland so enchanted. The skies had called from north to south, from east to west, "Flame forth in our most gorgeous colors! Let us rejoice to see the sun again, even as it sets!" Alone in the little car, I drove along those quiet wooded roads, the sky glowing with sunset pomp and glory. . . . And there at last shone Windermere. For about nine miles I crept along on low or sat, quiet, and gazed on the enchanted Cumberland world of woods and hills and water, and blessed English left driving that let me hug the side of the wooded road next the lake. No soul was abroad. In the dusk I drove back from Bowness over the lovely upland road via Winster and the Lyth Valley to Levens and Heversham, and hot cocoa by the fire.

The next day—another abbey founded or should we have built a cathedral?—the next day not one drop came down. There were times when only a last moment change of mind kept the wet on high. Perhaps some one with the requisite amount of faith was praying, and since no rain fell, prayers, it will be argued, can affect the weather.

Books and poems without end have been written about the Lake District. You can differ and argue as to which lake is the loveliest, which road the most rewarding. Every lake is lovely, every road rewarding. One should of course be walking, and walking only, in the Lake District. Yet the excitement we should have missed!—in return, granted, for richer gains. Let no one take to exploring off main roads in a car unless his or her nerves are made of rubber.

As for Wordsworth's own Grasmere, I found the old Wordsworth fervor making all that region an added delight. I sat in his small garden for moments when unbelievably no one else was there, and recited to myself, all my early love for Wordsworth swelling within me, "The world is too much with us." (June sat in the car and read Wodehouse.) I found Wordsworth's grave beside the little Grasmere church, the sun shining through the trees. . . . Some day I should like to stay at the White Swan Hotel—it looked very fine, yet not too fine. One night would do. For more I should want to be on Rydal. If it weren't too wet a time, I should most prefer a little tent and a kettle and frying pan, and sleep wherever I would and always out of sight of roofs and mankind, if one can get out of sight of mankind in the Lake District. But I should dislike being washed away.

When we reached Derwent Water, it seemed necessary to get on it. I could have had my choice of one hundred boats clamoring for trade, no Tal-y-Llyn barge among them. In a light narrow affair I sped two miles over the lake, physical exertion adding that much more to the glory of the sights one's eyes rested upon in all directions. Let us not write of blisters.

It would take a book to tell of what we did after Derwent Water—an afternoon of hair-breadth escapes from annihilation. I was a total wreck when we reached Heversham. Cliffs, curves, narrow bridges, gullies, hills, sharp turns, cars of all sizes . . . and finally after a road of ruts and gulches we found ourselves in a barnyard, faced with escaping pigs (a "pig-swarm," June wrote). What is one's responsibility in regard to escaping pigs?

I yanked up part of a dead tree, brandished it as energetically as my blistered hands and tired arms allowed, and called "shoo!" Whereupon the most enormous sow I ever saw lay down and looked vicious (anyhow she looked vicious to me). How do you get a lying-down-enormous sow to return to a barnyard? If I should learn I might never again have a chance to practise my acquired arts. I left the enormous sow where she was, just like that. I don't like pigs—it came over me that day.

The road the other side of the barnyard got worse. Had we had our baggage in the back seat the top layer surely would have slid over onto the front. It was almost like asking a car to get on friendly terms with a landslide. Anon came a sign which read "Impractical for Motors"—not the road we had been on but the road we were coming to. A nice Englishman with a pipe tramped by. We dared call to him to ask just how impractical. An American would have said: "My God, don't try it!" The Englishman, being English, answered charmingly that it got "jolly steep." That didn't sound too steep for us. If we could make it we could get to Buttermere!

We never got to Buttermere. I have never found a map which gave any name to that terrible and remote and deserted pass we stuck on, about a third of the way from the top. Left roared a stream in a steep gully, and no fence or wall that side of the forlorn and rutty road. On the other side rose a mountain, with a small drainage ditch between us and it. As I looked back down that gradient I shall confess to my heart sinking plunk to my boots. I was filled with fear, I was. The road was too narrow to turn around, the incline so steep that once we might start to back I did not feel equal to the demands on control and steering. Besides, I was really afraid, and a person is no use at anything which demands a cool head if he is almost trembling. Something wiser than my conscious self did the one right thing to do: I landed the inside wheels in the small ditch. That meant at least we couldn't go off into the canyon and the rain-swelled narrow torrent. By inches I backed down to

the one spot on the pass where we might be able to back in and then turn, if we could hoist ourselves up into the small quarry hole whence rocks for road-work had once been removed. By that time I was tasting conquest, and almost regretted the sight of a car coming over the pass in the easier and possible direction. All hands to the rescue, but first four stones found to barricade their wheels on that incline. They were the kind souls. We just were able to make the turn, and sobered, mild and mannerly we crept down that grade on first. "Impractical for Motorists." "Jolly steep." What does an Englishman call a precipice?

Back again to twists, turns, gullies and gulches, bridges meant for pigs and hills meant for grass, and on the less informal roads, oncoming cars. We were forever thinking we'd get where we wanted to be if we took the next right turn . . . or left. Evidently we should have turned left . . . or right. . . . Anyhow, we got back to Derwent Water, and from Derwent Water up the valley to Borrowdale. After tea we would get to Buttermere over the Honister Pass. . . .

At tea I overheard a waitress talking to a fellow-townsmen. A car had just been wrecked on the Honister Pass and the injured were being taken as speedily as their condition allowed to the nearest hospital. I inquired about the road to Buttermere from three inhabitants. Each, even for an Englishman, was too definite to leave much cheer. We valued our lives highly and came home . . . miles on end behind a huge lorry which blocked all views, and so many curves and so much traffic we never dared pass it. We arrived in Bowness just in time to see a motor cycle burst into flames and two young English riders act nonchalant with two cigarettes, for all the world like a Murad advertisement. My recollections of that day are lakes and hills and trees and waterfalls and roads never meant for cars. That night as I tumbled into bed I was weary with a car driver's weariness.

And the next day's diary begins "Today even lovelier than yesterday—and sun! Again what driving experiences!

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And the next day's diary begins "Today even lovelier than yesterday—and sun! Again what driving experiences!

Started off for Wast and Ennerdale—alas, why didn't we get off earlier? I had wrongly figured the distances we had to cover. Over Grange to Cartmel where I visited good abbey church to my liking, on to Newby Bridge and toward Furness leaving the abbey for afternoon tea. We never saw it, and at tea time were more than sixty miles away. As we got over to the coast the sun came out . . . so long, so long since we'd seen it. Such views! Such hills!!—Such hills to go down! Such hills to climb up! On and on we tore, miles and miles and miles, all lovely, all." (June wrote "west, the sky so blue, had we been going through the Chicago stockyards it would have been grand.") Then came Wast Water. June had never seen "such a gloomy and terrifying lake. The whole right side was one chain of mountains, which had partly broken off into landslides and dashed into the lake." But it was a grand sight, the left bank green enough with grass and trees, mountains rearing beyond the green. We were hungry to be climbing—and instead sat in the car up a vale beyond the end of the lake, and pointed out the routes we'd follow another year, provided, I probably remarked with deep bitterness, Wodehouse had written no new book about Jeeves. . . .

A Scots woman back at our little hotel told the next morning of taking their four-year-old daughter up into that valley where stands the smallest church in Great Britain and the smallest school—there are never more than six children. The daughter in some odd manner, it would seem, had a colored balloon with her. Those children up that lonely valley had never seen a balloon. To them a new wonder had come into their lives.

It was a fine road we took from Wast Water to the branch for Ennerdale, and a strange road over yellow moors of barren grass wastelands, the sun shining on all our world, to Ennerdale Bridge. From force of habit we took the wrong road to the lake. It led us to an old ruin—Norman castle?—Cistercian Abbey?—which my warm heart was however romantically grateful for. What ruined arches! Perhaps here stood a chapel!

Monks . . . knights . . . It was a deserted late nineteenth century bleachery.

We looked at the watch: five o'clock. We had planned to be at Furness Abbey in time for tea, and Furness Abbey was well over sixty miles away, with hills to climb in the direction south worse than those we engineered en route north. We would have tea, being starved, at Ennerdale Water, if it boasted a habitation.

We pushed on—some of the lakeland roads almost justify that verb—to the Lake. Never miss Ennerdale! And beside the lake was one of the most attractive inns of our journey. We chafed that we were not traveling as hitherto had always been our wont, full-accoutered, as it were, so that we could stop for the night where we would. We were tied by the invisible string of possessions, a hundred miles away in Heversham. That hotel was the only building on that half-wild, half-tamed lake. . . . Six o'clock, a hundred miles of Lake District roads to negotiate. We had better be on our way.

The surprises life springs on the just and the unjust. . . .

Nearing the top of a rutty hill not far from the inn our car hit some dreadful object with a clank and a jolt, the most terrible noises set up within its insides, and it refused to travel farther. Indeed and who would desire to travel farther in an object which produced such blood-curdling sounds? A pretty state of affairs indeed, and we a hundred miles from home.

A stylish car with a uniformed chauffeur rounded the curve from the inn. We nicely blocked their way. The two of us blocked the way of a third car. Finally there were four cars in a line—and all the stalwart males with their noses in our Austin and each possessed of second sight as to what ailed us, and no two agreeing. The most positive man knew we had broken an axle, bless his dear optimistic heart. Finally the youngster of the lot, a lad with a large "two bob" diamond horseshoe tie pin, and a diving Venus on his lapel, got us as far as the top of the hill and 'lowed we ought to be able to reach the nearest "garidge" eight miles away. Angels of heaven,

what going! Jerks . . . sputterings . . . rattlings . . . sickly crawlings . . . agony. It was as if our own insides were all about to fall apart in a horribly maladjusted collapse. Finally, on an incline a baby could toddle over, we stuck fast.

Ah, but we had friends in the world! That bedizened youth and the ruddy gentleman—and wife?—for whom he seemed to be chauffeuring kept tenderly just behind us. More tinkerings, and fussings, putterings and trials. Finally the youth announced he'd get a rope and tow us to a good "garidge" he knew about, some yet more than eight miles away. Feet on end of thin, weary-looking rope was produced from a farmhouse and coiled from their rear to our front, back and forth, back and forth. We progressed elegantly until a herd of cows hove around a bend. "Tommy" put on his brakes. When he started up again the rope gave up the struggle and left us totally surrounded by cows.

The ruddy-faced Irishman in his bowler took over the direction of affairs. Tommy was ordered to push our car to the top of the hill and coast with June to the nearest farmhouse after another rope. I was to get into his palatial Morris and drive it! Good grief, I'd rather have stuck in the midst of cows all night had I been given the choice. "Off with you Tommy!" and Tommy and June were off.

Do you think I could locate the starter on that Morris? In comparison with our snug little low Austin I felt as if I was perched up in a glassed-in lighthouse on wheels, and the contraptions there were about the insides of that car which were totally outside the life story of an Austin Seven filled me with dismay and forebodings. To start an Austin Seven you press a button near the floor with your left thumb. To start such cars as my vast American experience had started, you pressed something with your right foot. In that Morris I combined New and Old World pressings—my left thumb wore out and my right foot, and not a murmur from the engine. My life was further complicated by a running fire of suggestion and en-

couragement from the Irishman which were each funnier than the last, so that mainly I sat and giggled.

“Now Annie, you get back here and let me sit in front with the driver, and the two of us will get us whipping the dust of Cumberland off the roads.”

Annie creaked her bones into the rear seat, the Irishman and his bowler climbed in next me. “Now then, didn’t I know I’d be able to be of aid to you? I’m thinking this here is what you should have been pressing all along. Be ready now!” He pressed and the car gave a loud honk. “Well now, and who’d be guessing that was the horn! . . . I have it! Here’s the starter!”—and a ventilator opened to let air in. “Now indeed Tommy used to get the car to go—there must be a starter some place.” And by that time the two of us were all but overcome with the idiocy of our fate. No matter what either of us pressed or pushed or pulled or screwed something happened, but it never had anything to do with the engine. Annie sat rigidly in the back seat and looked straight ahead.

“Well then, it’s come to this,” announced the Irishman, wiping his brow, “I’ll get out and push.”

Which he proceeded to do. He was a big powerful man, but the Morris was a big powerful car. It did not budge. Two men came trudging along the road.

“Can we help you?”

“No thanks, she’s going fine!”

The Irishman waited till they were out of sight, “Sure I’d carry the car on my back before I’d be letting them think we couldn’t make it go!”

What I did, all unbeknownst, with some part of my anatomy must remain a mystery, but suddenly that engine made the noises it should.

“The Blessed Virgin!” shouted the Irishman and rushed around to his side of the car and jumped in. “Now we’ll go eighty miles an hour and make up for lost time!”

Eighty miles an hour. . . . I felt only slightly less miserable in this big limousine where nothing worked according to my

past than I had that first day in our Austin. Strange winding Cumberland roads, a strange car which took up I don't know how much more space than our little Austin . . . and a steady stream of remarks from the Irishman which kept me laughing so that I was more useless than usual. . . . And where by now were June and Tommy, and did they think we'd been smashed to bits or had taken some wrong turning? "Now you see, it's the fine car you're driving! You're doing first rate. Step on her, that's it. You ought to see Tommy drive! I've only had the car two months and we've gone eight thousand miles. . . . Heaven save us, you're only making twenty miles an hour—she'll do ninety when she's a mind to let herself go! . . . Tommy always takes this hill on high . . . you won't need to shift. . . . Well, maybe you will. . . . That's all right, she's going fine—Annie, hold on so you don't fall out! And them two smart fellers thinking we needed help!"

And no sight of our moribund Austin and Tommy and June. Devious and tortured as were our own advances, we were as contestants on the sands of Galveston compared with the forward movements possible to our gasping, chlorotic Austin.

"That's all right—they'll turn up some place. England's not a large land. You should be worrying, when you've come by a car twice the size of your old!" Once I tried haltingly, sentiments mixed with the anxieties of wondering if I really knew what to pull or where to press if I should have to stop suddenly, or minor exasperations over forgetting the inconvenient position of the honker on the window instead of in the middle of the steering wheel where all honkers ought to be, especially in a land where because of turns one has to honk most of the time—"Never mind if we run into something!—Our car'll be bigger than the other fellow's and it's they will be needing the priest, not us.")—Haltingly, I say, I tried to express my pain to the Irishman for all the bother and inconvenience we were putting him to, and to thank him for his exceeding kindness in our behalf.

"St. Peter won't keep you waiting one second at the gates of heaven!" I told him. "No, that he won't!" chuckled the Irishman. "He'd take one look at the mug on me and say, 'It's a fine idea of the happiness you think we're wanting to give the saints who land here if it's that face of yours they'll have to be looking at every day they're dead!'"

Who could measure the miles I drove? I wouldn't have taken that elephant of a Morris for a gift, not I. Liefer drive a bit of a low snug Austin, and all its insides fit to burst upon the ground. But miles we did cover, until as we crossed the bridge into Egremont, toward us was speeding a small familiar car holding two grinning occupants. "We were just going back to see what had happened to you." Not one painful mile of crawling beyond where the Irishman and I were using the international wits of the world on how to start a Morris limousine, it had suddenly come over Tommy what was the matter with our Austin. He got out, found a loose wire, screwed it where it belonged—and that poor little abused car was as good as the day we bought it. Nay better.

One of the coincidences of life was that weeks later, sailing on the Norfolk Broads the other side of England, we met two young men from Derbyshire. Something started me talking about the Irishman, whom I shall always consider one of the jewels of my life's shorter contacts—and lo, the young men of Derbyshire had known him all their lives! He had been indeed their family doctor until he took to wandering the earth with Tommy in his proud Morris. Annie was a maiden relative he was merely airing for the day.

By that time, our heartfelt and grateful goodbyes said, it was far too late to think of going back over Furness Abbey. We took the road over Cockermouth to Keswick, and from Windermere over the hills to hot cocoa and welcome beds.

The next day it poured. Like Pollyannas we were so thankful to have had two rainless days and one of them actually boasting some sunshine, that we now could not rail at this relapse. Besides, just as we reached Ullswater didn't the rain

stop? Before we could enjoy that most beautiful, perhaps, of all the lakes, we turned to get necessary nourishment into what was to me the most forlorn spot of all England, except that terrible hotel our second night at Whitstable. From a distance it looked attractive—an ex-private mansion set back on its ex-parked slopes. Inside it was decayed, moulding, empty, smelling of stale hotel clings and past private glories—long, long and very past. It gave me the creeps, so did the tea. I kept hoping the family who built it had been able to marry off their daughters successfully before they moved out. I asked to wash my hands. No place in England serves napkins with tea and all serve marmalade, so that once daily I was a mixture of car and stickiness. A gaunt maid was summoned. She beckoned me up some creaky back stairs. We reached a door where she motioned me to stop; then, first eyeing the approaches, she got down on her knees and extricated a key from under the carpet. "You can't trust nobody these days," she whispered fearfully. I wondered if the pink soap was poisoned.

Ullswater—the loveliness of that lake! Now and then a few weak drops fell languidly, but we drove along that magic road beside the lake shore with the top down. (Bah for limousines!) As we left the lake it poured; as we reached the summit of the hill toward Matterdale two rainbows circled from glistening wet oaks to glistening wet oaks, green glistening hills between.

Two nights before, returning from Cockermouth, we had driven along Bassenthwaite Lake. At a bend of the road there stamped itself on my delighted vision the picture of just the inn you might be thinking of when it is an English inn you are thinking of at all. So we were back to find Ye Olde Pheasant Inn for that our last night before Scotland.

As I write of our summer travels I have been reading a book which has meant an untoward amount to me—George Gissing's "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft." If I came so nearly missing this book altogether, what other unmeasur-

able riches am I letting slip by because of my colossal ignorance of men and letters? Here, because of Ye Olde Pheasant Inn on Bassenthwaite, I feel constrained to quote Gissing again. "Unless we are greatly deceived by the old writers, an English inn used to be a delightful resort, abounding in comfort, and supplied with the best of food; a place, too, where one was sure of welcome at once hearty and courteous. The inns of today, in country towns and villages, are not in that good old sense inns at all; they are merely public houses."

The Pheasant approaches an inn in the old sense. I do not hold with those mortals who feel it is the hall mark of a truly civilized cultured being that he take no thought of either food or raiment. We must eat to live and delicious food attractively served can add just that much even to a highly spiritual life. I make no pretence to be highly spiritual or highly civilized. Therefore with no apology I mention that one of our pleasant memories of this pleasant land of England is the tea we had at the Pheasant Inn in Cumberland. We had teas in perhaps eighty places during the summer. Only one approached the Pheasant. It is their pride, it has been the pride of that same inn for decades, to serve the best afternoon tea care and imagination and taste and generosity in amounts can produce. It is not for the like of me to be able to add any fitting tribute to the loveliness of the Lake District. Yet lest we turn discouraged in an age of lost graces, I dare end my chapter on the most lyrical region of the British Isles with this my small and worldly tribute to, if you will, a mundane art.

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CHAPTER 15

SCOTLAND: BURNS AND THE LEFT REAR WHEEL; LOCH LOMOND AND ROB ROY



IRATHER dread trying to write about Scotland. England up to Wales had seemed to me a land so lovely that I could dream, like Henry Ryecroft, that with the very larks, half the happiness of their exultant song was love of England. Who could wonder at the Englishman's deep passion for his land? Down the centuries poets, painters, writers of mere prose have tried to express something of the rapture the English countryside brought to their daily hearts, yet no man could have felt satisfied that he expressed half the love he felt.

Again it is Gissing's Henry Ryecroft who writes, this time of a corner of Somerset—but of how many counties could it not hold true?—"Beautiful beyond all words of description that nook of oldest England . . . unspeakable the charm to my ear of those old names, exquisite the quiet of those little towns, lost amid the tilth and pasture, untouched as yet by the fury of modern life, their ancient sanctuaries guarded, as it were, by noble trees and hedges overrun with flowers. . . . As I think of the golden hours spent there, a passion to which I can give no name takes hold of me: my heart trembles with an indefinite ecstasy.

"There was a time in my life when I was consumed with

a desire for foreign travel. . . . But . . . I do not believe I shall ever again cross the sea. What remains to me of life and of energy is far too little for the enjoyment of all I know, and all I wish to know, of this dear island."

After seeing what we did of his dear island (of course, to the average Englishman the dear island stops at about Hadrian's Wall if not before and I doubt if it includes any strip west of Offa's Dyke) I shall never feel any person guilty of overstatement, of overenthusiasm or overlove, for the English countryside.

Then came Wales, rugged where England was soft, wild where England was tended and gardened. No comparison is possible between most of Wales and most of England, yet Wales appeals for that reason to a corner of the heart the loveliest spot in England leaves untouched. If a choice had to be made, I would see more of the Welsh country now and England with the mellow years.

Scotland! What can one's heart do about Scotland? It has in places all the ruggedness and wildness of Wales and more, in places all the velvet softness of England, and in between, in places, country less wild than Wales, less soft than England, more beautiful than either. There is an appeal about Scotland which is stronger than the mountains and valleys of Wales, deeper than the rolling hills of England. If I could have but one summer in the British Isles before I die, it would be spent rambling Scotland. If I could live in the British Isles it would be southern England. If ever I contemplate burial, which return to barbarism may my mind be spared, I would that it could be the trees of Dryburgh Abbey which would twine their roots about my bones.

Probably I shall never see Scotland again, never live in England, and grant that not even my ashes find a known resting place.

Which still leaves me feeling helpless in the matter of writing as I would about Scotland. I have used the word "lovely" over and over for England. More variety and dis-

crimination might have been shown, yet I did not repeat "lovely" because I knew no other adjective. It is the one which exactly describes the English countryside, and no other is equally fitting.

No one adjective will suffice for Scotland! There were views which were stupendous, stretches of wasteland bleak beyond experience, valleys to cast a spell with their enchanted charm, lakes glorious in Highland settings, curves of small faraway beaches which wrenched the heart to pass, rivers tumbling to sea or loch with beauty to spare on either bank.

And rain . . . and rain . . . and rain. . . It is indeed an unco' thing that men and bairns thrive at all in the midst of so much haar and weet and skinking lifts. And some of them do not, not to suit them enough, what with this and that, the weet skies being the least of their troubles, and away they have sailed these decades on end to give the rest of the world its quota of Scots virtues.

Which is what June's grandfather proceeded to do, a lad of eighteen or twenty, and Ayr saw him no more. We had therefore a bit of a family lien on Scotland—mine on England is only two generations further back. So, after all, the summer was spent in the land of our not-so-distant forebears—all of June's, all of mine.

I could wish that I might claim by right a bit of Bobby Burns—being blood heir to him, blood of Scotland heir to him, means nothing as yet to June. We Americans rattle and scrape around with so little to bind us, considering the size and number to bind. If we could have a poet all men of every station could love, or at least could think they love—that would seem the most worthy, the richest bond a people could possess; a poet as dear to the coal miner as to the librarian, as treasured by the street cleaner as by the professor or the banker—and by other poets; a poet whose songs Americans far from home, meeting by accident, could sing more surely than their national anthem—which still would not mean very sure singing to be sure—whose matchless songs were indeed national anthems!

Scotland has Burns, whose poems, whose songs are "the links, the watchwords, the masonic symbols of the Scots race." Burns' songs are what they are because Scotland was what it was and Burns was what he was, and the combination, each taking the other to the heart (with reservations—with reservations!) resulted in such national poetry as few if any other countries possess.

Oh, there be the unco' guid in Scotland who tremble at the very thought of facing Burns and his poetry honestly. We are pretty much brothers under the skin wherever the world finds us. Every land gives birth to Righteous Souls who fear to see life whole, and consider a man's a man only when he toes the line we chalk. Scotland was sunk with the weary weight of Calvin-ridden kirk folk who believed that joy and laughter brought brimstone in their trail. Came laughter loving, tavern loving—aye lads and women loving Bobby Burns. "He snapped his pagan fingers at the gloomy kirk-made, ugly, vindictive, narrow-minded, key-hole-gazing tradesman's god and opened his arms to the beauty of this earth." Ah but the taverns and the women . . . ! As if he had not more cause to sigh over the miseries both brought into his life than any thin-lipped smirky critic. Yet where would the great-hearted man and the everlasting appeal of his poetry be had he not found such joys in both? To quote H. V. Morton again, who puts words together to bring my soul delight: "He was a faun born in an age of elastic-sided boots." If life had to be a choice between fauns and the wearers of elastic-sided boots. . . .

Alas, I did not know Burns well enough in Ayr or in Dumfries. We drove by the Globe Inn in Dumfries, we drove by the little "old clay biggin'" flush with the walk in Alloway. It is far more important that I have come to know him and to love him as I have than that I saw the inside of his birthplace. It is enough for the present to care enough that he was born.

—But my enthusiasm for Burns has carried me too far into Scotland. We must first reach Ayr.

Surely one needs only to travel to learn the lesson that in traveling one must be prepared for anything. Surprise may be allowed, despair never! Let us hasten to get the first day in Scotland behind us.

To begin with, we landed at the Scottish border subdued. I wish men at filling stations would not proceed to tell you all about an accident which just took place "up the road a ways." You can't drive off and leave them talking with a petrol hose in your tank.

We were going at a brisk rate along a delightful wooded road in the valley of the Nith; Dumfries and Thornhill behind us, Ayr the goal for the night, when June's voice punctured our appreciations of Scots nature. "Mom, stop! I hear a sound coming from that left rear wheel!" . . . One nut had broken off altogether, another was about to wear itself through, tithering helplessly. The third bolt only was holding that wheel on, and it loose. Was there a garage for miles? We crept along in dread foreboding, stopping ever and anon to tighten that one forever loosening bolt, yet even so expecting to see the wheel circle off against the fence, or loop through it into the Nith. We came at length to Sanquhar.

The rôle Sanquhar played in the history of the stiff-backed Covenanters and its ruined castle is not apparent to the tourist. It is merely a small colorless bleak stone town of one street, but on that one street stands one garage. We drove in. There was the same spattering of Sunday males leaning about, too washed for comfort, which in other years graced Sunday stables. A very clean blue-serged youth was the only garage man about. We explained our predicament, nor did he hesitate, resplendent as he was, to come to our rescue. In the end our Austin was the center of attention to every man young or old who had no place that Sabbath he wished to be in more than a darkening garage, nothing he wished to be doing more than proffering advice. They were a friendly, kindly lot, one man even insisting we should let his wife give us a bit of tea. How

we reveled in the Scots talk, so broad it was well nigh impossible for us to understand their expressions!

Alas, all too easily did we understand when they came to mention a car in the garage not far from ours. Some accidents are so horrible that even simple people whose lives clutch eagerly at the chance to narrate disaster found only isolated and jerked-out Scottish words to explain what had happened down the road we had just passed. We tried not to listen, yet it preyed on everyone's mind and was a subject difficult to leave altogether alone. And there stood that bloodstained car.

It began to grow so dark men could work only when we turned our electric torch on the scene. What a state the niceties of our rear wheel were in! Rain by this time was coming down in torrents. It would be a matter of some hours before the wheel job would allow us to drive on. Well then, stay the night in this dismal poured-on stone town of that early morning's tragedy and let the car be finished by daylight and in comfort. Was there a hotel?

A small hotel was mentioned but the owners of it were very ardent kirk folk and let no one in on Sundays.

Even on such a night as this?

Oh, they're Christians, they are! It was spoken with a note of scorn, for all that many a Scotsman in that land of "ferocious Sabbatarianism" might have uttered the same words without.

There was a little temperance hotel up the street.

Up the street we splashed and found the bit of a hotel, and the Scots mother and spinster daughter who owned it wide-eyed at two American females washed into their small dark hallway. They took us in as if our coming were indeed an integral part of the Divine Plan, as indeed it must have been, or should we have been there? The spinster daughter set herself to get two beds in order; we went to sleep on feathers under the roof, the rain beating against slate and windows.

Will the subject grow irksome if I mention that the second

day in Scotland, approaching Paisley, the left rear wheel started to come off again? Over and over was I not reminded of human ills and doctors? Each garage tinkered with us to the utmost of its ability, each falling just short of knowing exactly what to do, the two individuals most concerned so totally ignorant as to be completely at the mercy of "experts," and growing increasingly discouraged over permanent relief. Three thousand miles we were to drive without being certain all four wheels would remain under us. And yet, such is the blessed if dumb oblivion of human nature when not caught in the actual stranglehold of adversity, days on end we forgot all about that wheel.

But I shall never forget the murder that was in my heart weeks later in Norwich. The day had dawned when that fourth wheel was actually adjusted permanently to perfection. Indeed we could forget it. We left the car in a huge ultra-efficient-looking Norwich garage to be oiled and greased, and in the anxiety of the just-recovered I said to the official in charge: "Don't let a human being touch that left rear wheel! We've had no end of trouble with it but it's all right at last." A few hours later I went back to get a book out of the car—and there sat a greasy workman with his nose pressed against the naked axle projecting where a fourth wheel should have covered it.

"What—what *are* you doing to our left rear wheel??!!"

"The boss said there was something specially wrong with it."

Ah weel, a guid garage in Paisley put us together to last many a day, yet we tried to remember to look at that wheel now and then to see if it were still with us.

It would be evident to anyone who reads this book that such a summer as June and I spent in the British Isles, covering over five thousand miles in less than three months, was the most superficial sort of traveling. You can see a country from a car; you cannot know it. I took full and disillusioned count of

that before ever we started out, yet deliberately, for what I had in mind, chose skimming over much surface to probing fewer square miles and those deep. Over and over I hold that really to know a country one must travel, first and arch consideration, alone; second, one must go at a walker's pace, mentally if not physically. Faster than a bicycle leaves far too many unexplored gaps, not only in the land journeyed over, but more important, too many fellow beings passed without contact.

This surface travel irked me especially in Scotland. In the first place, all my life the Scots tongue has held me fascinated. I would have asked any question of every mortal I came upon in Scotland and paid no attention to his answer except for the words going straight to my delighted heart. The Welshman had always been and still is a stranger to me, nor did I chafe in Wales over not getting closer. But Scotland—myself yearning to hold converse with any and every Scot, and I know not one of them better today than I knew him before the summer.

Yet there are consolations to be found. Before starting out, my idea of learning to know something of the British Isles was to see as much as possible with my own eyes, since the panorama of land and landmarks is with difficulty come by second hand, to be supplemented by much reading of books written by people far wiser than I. After all, in a land the age of these islands, the people with whom even the most fortunate and leisurely of mortals might hold the most fortunate and leisurely of converse represent but flicks on the surface of ten thousand and more years of inhabitants, every one of those millions as much a personality as men stirring about their tasks today. All the talk in the world with every man alive today—and what would we know of any land with a history? In a country as old, or as young, as the British Isles, a decade of intercourse with mankind and nature might still yield less than one year of intensive reading, if it is—never mind the first nine thousand, five hundred years, but only the last five hundred, one would come even partially to understand. Which does not

mean I am resigned to motoring as the ideal method of travel. I would still bandy words with every willing man upon the road.

SUCH poverty of knowledge as I possessed about Scotland before the summer, and that skimpy little so vague: plaids, Barrie and Thrums, Scott and a jumble of almost totally forgotten scenes and characters, Harry Lauder, heather, Burns, a mental picture of Princess Street in Edinburgh, Ramsay MacDonald, Scottish Chiefs, small white and blue book with gilt pattern and criminally fine print, read with gusto at the age of ten, grandfather Parker, whom I never saw, "Coming Through the Rye," an almost threadbare toleration of Scottish jokes. . . .

It was no strain on the mind to develop a bit more intelligence, considering the space to let. We motored over a thousand miles in Scotland; we read some few books on the spot. I have browsed through many since, beginning with Defoe and Boswell and Johnson back in the eighteenth century, early and late, up to that most delightful of modern books, written by a man who can combine motoring and a rare variety of personal contacts on the way (or rather make you believe he had them), Morton's "In Search of Scotland." The ideal would be to have read all these books in the country—tens of them, histories, sociologies, poetry, travels. With the means to buy the books, plus the cost of packing them about, one would need unbounded time for the reading. Instead we whirled through Scotland, stormed on, gloating—and I sit by the hour and read and read and read in the British Museum, seventeen books under my nose this minute. I should be resigned to traveling the world over on the same terms—see all I can with my own eyes in shockingly superficial fashion . . . and read by the day, week and month in some library, no matter where, on my return. It is not the ideal method, but it is a compromise which would be bearable!

It is odd, considering the short time we were in Scotland this last summer, how pro-Scots we left it. Bonnie Prince

Charlie—I would mount the stairs of a provincial two room museum to gaze on a lock of his hair; Flodden Field—find a Scot whose heart melts to “The Flowers of the Forest” more limpidly than mine, after a week in Scotland:

“... We’ll hear nae maer liting, at the ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae:
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The flowers of the forest are a’ wede awae....”

Mary Queen of Scots—ah the beautiful one! She had us at her feet, pitying the so evident shortcomings of Elizabeth. As for Culloden Moor, it was a tragedy we could hardly bear to think upon. Edinburgh was indeed one of the winning cities of our world. The Highland Clans—there you had Romance! At the sight of kilts and tartans the Austin skithered in the road. My heart in the Highlands—down in York I bought a jar of Flora Macdonald cold cream....

Grant at once this is all sentiment and froth unbacked by necessary and tempering knowledge; grant that had we spent a just amount of time among the industrial sections, the slums of Edinburgh and Glasgow, along the Clyde; had we made a study of actual human conditions in the Highlands, we had been humming no ballads about the perfections of Scotland. To anyone traveling for historical background, plus the love of sights of man and God, castle and glen, the present bears only a fraction’s importance to the whole. Therefore I repeat for the last time, the bulk of even an actual traveler’s knowledge must be derived, in the end, out of books.

It was not until we reached Loch Lomond that we came by that “benorth the mont” feel, the Scotland of the Highlands with its mountains, its glens, its straths, its lochs... its Romance. Up to the time we ferried across the Clyde on four dependable wheels and put Dumbarton behind us, actual Scotland had meant grandfather Parker, Bobbie Burns, a good bit

of uninteresting going, and that wheel of moods and whimsies. Once we began the road which for twenty-four miles runs along the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond, the rear wheel could have gone and come and gone again—would we have marked the difference? Yes, June might have. At one point that lake with its encircling mountains, its wooded islands, its soft banks with trees to the water's edge, "one of the world's glories," seemed to carry my soul right out of me, merely leaving two hands to steer a car.

"Is there a king of Portugal?"

Back from shrouded Ben Vorlich, Ben Lomond, from glens with their falls tumbling to the lake, from wooded coves, from crags and cliffs, collapsed my spirit within my ribs again. Portugal? Nothing ever yanked the enthralled fancies back to earth with such a jolt as my daughter in the midst of our first Highland glory inquiring about a king of Portugal.

What she should have asked on the banks of Loch Lomond, had she gotten down to personalities at all, was some question to show her heart was brooding on no other than Rob Roy. Rob Roy could have slain three kings of Portugal with one blow. Across the lake from our road was the cave where he was forced to hide, and where Bruce had hidden before him. This whole Loch Lomond region was Macgregor country:

"... And there among the rocks he lived
Thru summer's heat and winter's snow;
The eagle he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below..."

Why be in the Highlands without the Highlanders? Rob Roy was close to being the last legend and hero and fact of the mountains, and as the beauty of Loch Lomond is the perfect introduction to the Highlands, let Red Rob Macgregor be the perfect introduction to the Highlanders. If those who traded (or took) cattle before or after him, who marched over the passes to sneer at the Lowlands or the English, who kept feuds hot and steel sharp and heads high—if they seem less pic-

turesque in detail it is largely because they happened to be less sung. Pilgrim fathers were stalwartly putting representative government to its first tests in Massachusetts; Queen Anne and George I were monarchs of a polished England, Glasgow, forty miles away, was a great commercial city and seat of a learned university when Rob Roy was the terror of glen, clan and hamlet, the Robin Hood of Scotland six hundred years after England brooked such a scorner of the law.

Feudalism in its heyday was but a half-hearted thing compared to the spirit of the Highland clans for seven hundred years. The serf who tended his meagre holding was of no personal interest whatever to the knight above him, who fought for the lord above him because it was on that understanding he held any security of his own. In the Highland clan the lowliest clansman felt himself blood relation to his chief, and obeyed him, fought for him, loved him, as his father. His surname was by rights the same as his chief's. The clan was indeed a family affair, and the pride of family permeated from highest to lowest.

Where have land and customs better played into each other's hands? "The country, though in many places so wild and savage as to be almost uninhabitable contains on the sea coasts, on the sides of the lakes, in the vales of small streams, and in the more extensive straths through which larger rivers discharge themselves, much arable ground; and the mountains which surround these favored spots afford ample pasture walks, and great abundance of game. National forests of oak, fir and birch are found in most places of the country, and were anciently more extensive. These glens or valleys were each the domain of a separate tribe, who lived for each other, labored in common, married usually within the clan, and, the passages from one vale to another being dangerous in most seasons, and toilsome in all, had very little communion with the world beyond their own range of mountains. . . ."

Yet cattle trading did beguile certain Highlanders yearly over the mountain passes to the lowlands. To continue quoting

Scott: "The more southern counties saw specimens of these men, following droves of cattle which were the sole exportable commodity of their country, plaided, bonneted, belted and brogued, and driving their bullocks, as Vergil is said to have spread his manure, with an air of great dignity and consequence. To their nearer lowland neighbors they were known by more fierce and frequent causes of acquaintance. . . ."

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Highlander was his thirst for vengeance. How busy it must have kept him in those days when there was always some deed to be avenged! It is again Scott who tells the story of the dying chief whose clergyman begged him on his death bed to forgive a certain enemy—" 'Vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord!" "Weel, I forgive him," sighed the chief, with almost his last breath. Rousing himself he turned to his son. "But the deil take you, Donald, if *you* forgive him."

Once the Clan Macgregor, claiming descent from one of Scotland's earliest kings, possessed much honor and much power and much land. Yet for one cause or another, too historical to enter into here, gradually they became a people dispossessed, homeless. Now it was the Campbells who took advantage of a bloody feud between the Macgregors and the MacNabs, and managed to dispossess them of much property. Macgregor a Rua Rua, heir to the chief, was slain by Colin Campbell, and from that late fifteenth century date the fortunes of the clan fell ever lower.

But the fight that was left in them, the pride! All this I tell because every detail of it, except for the measure of dispossession against the Macgregors, from the sound of the Scots names to the vengeance and the murders, was part and parcel in some degree of every strath and glen in the Highlands, and existed in some degree up to the final dissolution of the clans after Culloden.

Elizabeth may have been giving royal audience to Spenser's *Færie Queene* in that very year when a party of Macgregors belonging to the tribe of Dugald of the Mist (and if



SANQUHAR



RIVER FALLOCH

ALONG LOMOND

you can think up a better bona fide name than that you were born a few hundred years too late) met with a ranger seeking venison for the king, a kinsman, it so happened, of a chieftain who had once executed certain Macgregors for this and that. Vengeance! . . . The following Sunday the Clan Macgregor was convoked in the church of Balquhiddel, when the bloody head of the ranger was placed upon the altar. Every clansman laid his hand upon it in turn and vowed protection to the slayers. By the code of clan ethics this murder to square old wrongs had in turn to be avenged. Thirty-six of the clan of Dugald of the Mist were slaughtered upon a single farm.

Such matters affected Macgregors little. It was the last year of Elizabeth's reign, that Golden Age of England, when Macgregors met Colquhouns (Co-hoons) in the "tumult and combustion" of the Battle of Glenfruin, eight miles west of Loch Lomond. "The combat was foughten with great courage" and almost wiped the Clan Colquhoun from history. When the widows of the slain Colquhouns appeared before King James, each bearing the bloody shirt of her dead husband—such is the story—he had the Clan Macgregor outlawed. No man should so much as bear the name upon pain of death, nor dare more than four of the clan presume to assemble. Any man of any clan could slay a Macgregor and be blessed. They were hunted with bloodhounds, women were branded on the cheek with hot irons, yet the proud clan lived on . . . and anon, into the by-then-less-lawless and embittered life, begat Rob Roy between Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine.

Who could flourish a broadsword in all Scotland like Rob Roy? It was not alone his great size and his uncommon strength but "they long arms o' his, ye mind, he could untie the garters frae his hose without a stoop or hogging up his back." People were well aware that he had once seized the horns of a great stag and held him fast. He is our Hero, born too late for the troubadour, but not for Sir Walter Scott.

Rob Roy was an honest cattle trader in his younger days, already a character of parts in that he called his stalwart

followers forth to redress wrongs suffered by those not able to avenge themselves. A band of Macraes steal fifteen cattle from Macgregors. Rob Roy is off in hot pursuit, with a hand-to-hand single combat between himself and the chief of the Macraes in a lone glen, gypsies, Macraes, Macgregors, looking on in a cold sweat. Like combatants of an earlier day,

“They swakked their swords, till sair they swat
And the blood ran down like rain.”

In the end not a live Macrae was left in the glen.

To further his honest dealings Rob Roy had borrowed from Montrose, his adopted leader—Macgregors were still not recognized as a clan. In time debts forced the surrender of his property to Montrose. When Rob Roy returned from a journey he found his home burned, his wife and children driven forth. According to a blood relative of the day: “Weel, Rob came hame, and fand desolation, God pity us! where he left plenty. He looked east, west, south and north, and saw neither hauld nor hope—neither beild nor shelter—sae he e’en pu’d the bonnet over his brow, belted the broad sword to his body, took to the brae-side, and became a broken man.”

Then indeed did Rob Roy consider vengeance his due! He waylaid the rent collector of Montrose just as he had finished the job of collecting all the rents, helped himself to the funds, and as a parting gesture deposited this Killeen on a wild island in the center of Loch Katrine in the middle of December, leaving him there in winter solitude long enough to ruminate on his past, present and future. . . . There was nothing Montrose could with surety call his own—cattle, rents, no possession was safe. A thousand pounds he placed upon Rob Roy’s head. Yet what could Montrose do against a man when his followers, the poor and the oppressed, adored and sheltered him? He could capture the outlaw by foul means, strap him behind a trusted clansman, ride him to Edinburgh to be given punishment and a jail sentence . . . but the man escapes en route, and a lot of good it does to shoot at a tartan floating

down the current of a river to be crossed when Rob Roy is laughing in the bushes. Rob pens a letter asking aid of the Duke of Atholl and therein expresses an unquestionable truth: "God knows but there is vast differs between Dukes."

Every Scot knows the death scene, Rob Roy old and feeble, five lives packed into his one, and all near the end. A man called for whom Rob Roy felt no love. "Lift me up," cried Rob Roy, "dress me in my best clothes; tie on my sword; place me in the great chair. That fellow shall never see me in my death bed."

After the visitor departed Rob Roy called, "It is over, put me to bed! Call in the piper and let him play 'Ha til mi tuliadh' ('I will return no more') until I die." . . .

"Bear witness many a pensive sigh
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
And by Loch Lomond's braes.

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same;
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
At sound of Rob Roy's name."

CHAPTER 16

SCOTLAND: WORDS ON THE WEATHER, ON LOCH AWE, ON LIVING IN SCOTCH CASTLES, ON VARIOUS ENERGETIC CLANS, AND ON CROSSING LOCH LEVEN. THE ROAD ALONG THE CALEDONIAN CANAL DEPOSITS US IMPOVERISHED AT INVERNESS, ON THE DAY THE MACKINTOSH OF MACKINTOSH AND MRS. MACKINTOSH CELEBRATE THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING



I WONDER if the Scots themselves ever expect—or want—the rain to stop. When I first read that two weeks without rain in Scotland is a matter to be taken up in the churches, I thought it meant that God was to be thanked for such a blessing, but by the time I got acquainted with the climatic situation I concluded that two rainless weeks would impel a Scot to beseech Heaven that his world might once again become familiar. Ramsay tells of a Scots lad who found himself serving in the West Indies. When the second day there dawned sunny his morning greeting was “Anither het day, Cornal,” as if two in succession in the Barbadoes were the seven years’ wonder they would prove in his own rain-drenched Highlands.

There are numerous reasons why I delight in old travel books; worn volumes on Scotland are in addition a great consolation. You realize God doled out no extraordinary brand of retribution for special sins of your own. He sends His Scots rains on the just and the unjust, on that Wonderful Man, Dr.

Sam'l Johnson, on poets of eternal fame and virtue, on . . . Parkers. Boswell: Tuesday, 7th September (1773). "It was a very wet stormy day. . . . Wednesday, 8th September. When I waked, the rain was much heavier than yesterday. . . . Thursday, 9th September. The day was showery. . . ." Again and later, "It rained all day and gave Dr. Johnson an impression of that incommodiousness of climate in the west." Carr in the account of his 1807 Scots travels quoted some wag as saying that Scotland had "nine months of winter and three of bad weather." This is the sort of thing Carr pens for posterity: "The next day, the morning of which was '*soft*' (in other words, it rained as hard as it could pour) . . ." ". . . The view of the lake . . . must be very wonderful on a fine day, with which I was not favoured, and which is somewhat of a rarity in this weeping climate. . . ." On our very Loch Lomond did not Johnson himself write: "The heaviness of the rain shortened our voyage. . . ." But then scenery ever meant precious little to "the Sage," who held that a blade of grass was a blade of grass wherever it grew and "water is the same everywhere." To me the poem of Wordsworth which sums up in its title the potential atmosphere of a Scots summer is, "Bothwell Castle (passed unseen on account of stormy weather)."

So then, what if Parkers on Loch Lomond awoke to torrents? By two-thirty it was still coming down in torrents, so off we drove anyway, nor could a downpour keep the views right and left and ahead totally hidden. Besides, rain makes falls more roaring and tumultuous than ever, and sometimes it stops, even in Scotland, as it did for us driving up wild Glen Falloch of many falls and trees, the river dashing along frantically beside us, misty mountains round about. At Crianlarich, Highland village in its valley, we turned west through Strathfillan, which left its soft livable slopes for a valley bleak and treeless, Ben Lui rising brown and bare to the left, Ben More, Strobrian and the mountains of Glen Falloch mist-shrouded behind us, the road skirting continual mountains on the right. (" . . . Man, the Scotch hills jist grap ye in the mooth for a' the

world like speerits.") Here in a bend beside the River Fillan was fought the Battle of Dalru, swirling plaids bloodstained, clash of claymores, as Bruce in 1306 was attacked by John of Lorn, avenging the murder of his kinsman the Red Comyn, stabbed by Bruce in a Dumfries church. Bruce in that battle of faraway days slew three Macdougall brothers. He himself escaped slaughter by wrenching free of a vengeful Macdougall, leaving behind in that clutching fist his tartan and a priceless brooch, in Macdougall possession to this day.

Not a car nor a human being did we pass, yet the only unappealing feature of that barren mountainous region was the sudden intrusion of a train below us. Surely it was wandering trackless far from where trains belonged, and, "as it were, under protest."

From bare Strathfillan the road turned into the lonely glen of the Lochy, winding its way to Loch Awe, leading us along the foot of Ben Lui to Dalmally. If only—that expression which kept us on our way in Scotland as it had in Wales, alas and not alas—if only the weather had been propitious, we should have climbed Ben Lui from Dalmally. Dalmally itself looked tempting enough for any traveler with its roadside tree-sheltered hotel, its old church, its green and wooded valley. But the view of the Highlands one is said to get from Ben Lui on a clear day! There must have been such an one once, else how is man so definitely aware that the view is thus and so? Too, it was strong in my heart to go up the "beautiful but rough" road through lonely Glen Orchy to our right, once belonging to Macgregors.

"Glen Orchy's proud mountains, Kilchurn and her towers,
Glen Strae and Glen Lyon no longer are ours,
We're landless, landless, landless, Gregarach."

If you prefer lakes which keep you ever mindful that they are lakes, instead of tricking your fancy into an illusion of their having turned seas, then there is no loch in Scotland you could not love. You need only look at a map to appreciate,

first, how many lochs there are (the guide book mentions over 240), and second, how close is that opposite bank. Yet in length each allows for any feeling of expanse the soul might crave. If Scots lakes were as broad as they are long there would be no dry land in Scotland.

So then there is Loch Awe, twenty-three miles long and you say "tut, tut, too big for a lake." But patience—its average width is a mile. There now, a lake! "Magnificently grand" it is up the north end, and a fine clan country to start your imagination humming over the days of the Middle Ages when Campbells, Macgregors, Macarthurs, brought their share of strife and peace and glory and misdeeds to its banks. "It's a far cry to Lochow! (Loch Awe)" was a Campbell's equivalent for "Catch me if you can!"

Perhaps you prefer wild mountain scenery untouched by man, and that must be a wondrous sight—our high Sierras in California, Idaho ranges, the Rockies. . . . Some of us may never set our yearning feet on those far distant trails except in dreams . . . but dream we do, forever.

And yet there is a special blessing of Heaven too on those fortunate enough to look upon a dark lake guarded by mist-ringed mountains, woods of birch and fir, pine and alder sloping to its banks, islands, small wooded islands, looking their long ages toward the shore—and on one island the ruins of an old Cistercian Abbey, and on one jutting knuckle of the opposite bank, once an island itself, an ancient ruined castle.

Wild scenery mixed with history is never so wild as scenery where history never found its way to lodge. Granted. Yet a castle to my grateful eyes is recompense for much lost wilderness. If one have the time to go exploring, here on this lake is a crumbling stronghold of the Macdonalds; an ivy covered ruin of the Campbells holds its peace on the island of Innischonnel; around the ruins of the abbey on its island Macarthurs lie buried; a once proud castle of the Macnaughtons has fallen into oblivion. And lastly, the sombre ruins of Kilchurn Castle of Colin Campbell, Black Knight of Rhodes and

founder of the historic house of Breadalbane, with its keep, its gateway, its towers partly built, perhaps, with money paid the first Earl of Breadalbane in 1691 to buy the allegiance of the Highlands to William of England. Here Breadalbanes lived till 1740. Long have I searched to learn what that date 1740 means, yet no historian shares my curiosity as to why in a certain year and not some other a family moves out of a still intact and noble castle which it had inhabited exactly three hundred years. Did the bloody ghastly memory of the massacre of Macdonalds in the Pass of Glencoe fifty years before, in which the Earl of Breadalbane played his ignoble part, mean the Highlands were no longer a place of comfort and refuge? Did there come to be too many memories of bloodshed? Was leaving that castle a relief? Was it a wrench?

Or, could some Boswell have left us a record, would the Lady of Kilchurn have paralleled the Lady of Dunvegan? I could feel the tumult pulling two ways in my own heart, had I been the lady of a Scottish Chief, as I read Boswell's account of Dunvegan in Skye, the ancestral home of the Macleods since time out of reckoning. (It was the weather forced us to abandon our own planned trip to Skye.) By the time the twelfth century Rorie More Macleod came along—and that, I put it down in the record, is my favorite name in all Scotland; I want to name something Rorie More Macleod, but what?—by the time Rorie More came along, and he was as good as his name for deeds to keep the bards singing till they were hoarse, Dunvegan was three hundred years old—in the twelfth century.

It gave me more of a thrill than any bit of historical fiction ever could have when I read of Boswell and Johnson being entertained in Dunvegan, staying on happy days as guests of the Macleods—and by then that castle had been lived in nine hundred years. Johnson "had hitherto most strangely slept without a night cap," but Miss Macleod made him "a large flannel one," because he had taken cold. It was on Johnson's birthday they discussed living in a castle on a rock: "Lady M'Leod and I got into a warm dispute. She wanted to build a

house upon a farm which she had taken, about five miles from the castle, and to make gardens and other ornaments there; all of which I approved of; but insisted that the seat of the family should always be upon the rock of Dunvegan. . . . The lady insisted that the rock was very inconvenient; that there was no place near it where a good garden could be made; that it must always be a rude place; that it was a Herculean labour to make a dinner there. I was vexed to find the alloy of modern refinement in a lady who had so much old-family spirit.—‘Madam (said I), if once you quit this rock, there is no knowing where you may settle. You move five miles first; then to St. Andrews, as the late Laird did; then to Edinburgh; and so on till you end at Hampstead or in France. No, no; keep to the rock: it is the very jewel of the estate. It looks as if it had been let down from heaven by the four corners, to be the residence of a Chief. Have all the comforts and conveniences upon it, but never leave Rorie More’s cascade.’—‘But, (said she) is it not enough if we keep it? Must we never have more conveniences that Rorie More had? He had his beef brought to dinner in one basket and his bread in another. Why not as well be Rorie More all over as live upon his rock? And should not we tire, in looking perpetually on this rock? It is very well for you, who have a fine place, and everything easy, to talk thus, and think of chaining honest folk to a rock. You would not live upon it yourself.’—‘Yes, madam (said I), I would live upon it, were I Laird of M’Leod, and should be unhappy if I were not upon it.’—Johnson (with a strong voice, and most determined manner) ‘Madam, rather than quit the old rock, Boswell would live in the pit; he would make his bed in the dungeon.’—I felt a degree of elation, at finding my resolute feudal enthusiasm thus confirmed by such a sanction. . . . My opinion on this subject is still the same. An ancient family residence ought to be a primary object. . . .”

Now that castle is over a thousand years old, and still technically the home of the Macleod of Macleod, but today—ah Romance with your drooping wings—today he lives in Eng-

land. Boswell was right. Still, once a year the family does come back to Dunvegan for a visit. I strongly suspect, in all honesty, that is the compromise I too should make if I owned a thousand-year-old castle on a rock. . . . But to leave altogether a castle with its hundreds of years of memories and associations . . . I wish I could know what the Lord and Lady of Kilchurn Castle had for their thoughts the last night they spent in the stronghold Colin Campbell—some say it was his wife while he was in the Holy Land—built in 1440 on the site of an ancient fortress of the Macgregors.

OUR road followed the River Awe where it swirled and eddied and rippled out of the lake to make a trout's or salmon's mouth water. We drew up to watch two fishermen on the wild opposite bank catch nothing. Then came the "deep dark" Pass of Brander guarded by lone Ben Cruachan, whose rugged heights have looked down upon battles of the Bruce, of Wallace, and a roaring River Awe stained with Highland blood. Another mountain which surely should be climbed is Ben Cruachan, if its head could be extricated from the mists. "The road through this romantic Glen is narrow, and careful driving is necessary, especially at the numerous sharp twists and bends. The Pass is three miles in length and at one part the rocks rise precipitously on the right to a height of 1400 feet."

Across the tumbling river at the Bridge of Awe down in the valley where Bruce and Macdougalls had more of their battles over six hundred years ago, along Loch Etive, where the majesty of the mountains behind us, the lake at our feet, caused a halt of wonder and thanksgiving. . . . Further on we passed the ruins of Dunstaffnage Castle guarding the entrance to Loch Etive upon its rock pedestal, almost fifteen hundred years ago the site of Scotland's most important stronghold. Here kings were crowned on the "Stone of Destiny" before it was removed to Scone in the ninth century, whence Edward carried it majestically to England in the thirteenth, where it

now rests in the coronation seat of British kings. What history has surged around that rock! Wars between early Scots and Picts . . . Norwegians in possession . . . seat of Scottish royalty . . . bloody battle of Macdougals of Lorne, whose stronghold it became after Scone was made the capital. Bruce occupies it after the Battle of the Awe . . . ancient records show it in the possession of a Campbell, son of our Colin Campbell of Loch Awe. . . . Two years before America is discovered James IV of Scotland visits Dunstaffnage to win the allegiance of the wild Highland chiefs. . . . In the days of "the Fifteen" and "the Forty-five" the castle guards the royal power of Scotland and England against the Highland Jacobites. . . . The last light of history plays on "a little woman, of a genteel appearance, and uncommonly mild and well bred," Flora Macdonald of the Highlands, who spends ten days in 1746 as prisoner in Dunstaffnage on her way to London to answer for the part she played in aiding and abetting the escape of Prince Charles Edward Stewart. . . . "It now serves only as a refuge for a few fishermen."

All the history of the Highlands as the Highlands echoes about that rock guarding Loch Etive, from Picts through clan feuds to the final embittered recognition of royal power in London . . . and yet the stones of a clan stronghold cannot crumble until they have sheltered Flora Macdonald, the woman who risked her life in the Lost Cause of her mountains and glens.

"Bonnie Charlie's noo awa
Safely o'er the friendly main;
Mony a heart will break in twa,
Should he ne'er come back again. . . ."

Ne'er again did he come back. There stands the stones of Dunstaffnage. In the Highlands yet beats the heart of many—what Borrow rather contemptuously called a "Charlie-over-the-water" Scot. Stones and loyalties crumble slowly.

THE town of Oban in its island sheltered harbor won our hearts. There is a delightful summer for some one who cares not to be forever "on the mileage"—Oban for headquarters, and short and longer trips without end to the Hebrides, into the Highlands. . . .

But we Parkers were on a diplomatic mission bent. The next day at Fort William who was to officiate in matters of high local importance but the Duke of York, second son of the King of England. Attendance thereon bearing with it no danger to life or limb (is there nothing nowadays one could do to be held in an intact Highland castle?) we appointed ourselves unofficial representatives of President Hoover at the unveiling of some aluminum works, or whatever it was inter-empire amity and good will was calling upon the royal house of England to perform.

What was our double indignation therefore to be held up on a measly railroad bridge beyond Oban and forced to pay seven shillings and ten pence for crossing it. June had six pence held out graciously to defray expenses. Could we have counted on the support of Macdougals, Macnabs, Macdonalds, Macgregors, Maclachlands, Macfarlands, Macintyres, Mackenzies, Mackays, Macleans, Mackintoshes, Macleods, Macphersons, Mackinnons and Macnaughtons, we should have filled that toll collector with cannon balls and reinstated the Stewarts. However the road from Connil Bridge on was so beyond words to our liking we magnanimously allowed the matter to drop.

I would that I had words to describe that late afternoon drive along Loch Creran. The benighted train must cut across it on a "convenient" bridge, whereas a car not only may but must, to the everlasting thanksgiving of its occupants with eyes, meander seven miles around the head of the loch. If Scotland becomes Progressive enough some Chamber of Commerce undoubtedly will build a nice short cut for cars as well, with a radio address from the first driver—the mayor—who passes over. What a seven miles of woods and water, mountains and glens! So utterly deserted was the road, so riotously

happy our hearts, we burst forth into a two voice original opera, Wagnerian in length and volume. It took miles for the singing of the opening theme, somewhat ribald and Rabelaisian, and scandalizing to all Scots rabbits, who fled into their holes and took refuge in Presbyterian prayer. What the shades of the Stewarts of Appin took to we had no means of finding out. This was their country—

“... The noble Clan Stewart, the bravest of all,
Oh-hon, au Righ! and the Stewarts of Appin!
The gallant, devoted old Stewarts of Appin!
Their glory is o’er,
For the clan is no more,
And the Sassenach sings on the hills of green Appin.”

And the Parkers, who, after all, would rank to Stewarts as despised Sassenachs, or Lowlanders.

Past Appin, where the ancient seat of the Stewarts was guarded by the mountains of Appin towering to the east, we drove miles along the shore of Loch Linnhe. From Oban our way had been “beset with ruined castles and towers,” on the mainland, on islands dotting the wide Loch Linnhe. One small island possessed three. Late we rounded the banks where Loch Leven spreads into Loch Linnhe, and dusk it was when we came to Ballachulish.

Woe to a timid soul who arrives in Ballachulish at dusk—or at any hour, and she no swarthy old timer at the wheel. There is a ferry at Ballachulish, a very small affair, hardly more, at dusk, than a raft. The current from Loch Leven rushes madly on to empty itself into Loch Linnhe. There is a narrow steep (anyway steep at dusk) driveway at right angles to the road leading headlong into the tempestuous waters. But you do not drive your car headlong into them—you turn sharply at the bottom, just short of destruction, and, provided your wheels make the two bits of wood placed at a horrible angle (horrible angle at dusk) for the purpose, miraculously find yourself aboard a conveyance which, in the dusk, has next

to nothing to keep you from lurching off into the torrents fore and aft. I swear to heaven that I know the *exact* frame of mind in which travelers of former days erected crosses or entered monasteries or bequeathed earldoms in return for landing safely on opposite shores.

We could have spent the night in a most respectable hotel on the south shore of Loch Leven. The tempter whispered "First sleep!" But remembering Sennen Cove and how I woke at midnight with the ague for sticking on that "one in five" hill, I was not going to wake at midnight on the wrong side of Loch Leven coming up for the third and last time from the bitter rushing waters, a precious Austin Seven sinking down . . . down . . . down . . . to be overgrown with carbuncles and sea urchins and long dank sea weed. On the further shore of Loch Leven a night's rest would be untroubled.

We reached that further shore without being swept to destruction, our palpitating hearts not soothed at all during the crossing by three very wet, very dirty, very cold-looking gypsies, the man of the family turning the occasion to such profit as he could by serenading us in our front seat uneasiness with the most mournful bagpipe wails. Thus did he become our moral equivalent for cross, for abbey, for cloister walls. Upon him we bequeathed our earldom of two shillings, the business end of it discharged, however, before we realized getting off that barge was of a piece, only worse, than getting on.

Wrote Carr in 1807, who was concerned with nothing more than getting his own two feet aboard the ferry: "Loch Leven is about a quarter of a mile across and a more grand and beautiful assemblage of objects than those which are presented to the eye in all directions in crossing this ferry, I never beheld. A verbal picture, however vivid, would not fail to be a very imperfect picture. Soon after I arrived . . . the rains, which had ceased for a short time, just to unveil to me this romantic and enchanting scenery, descended with redoubled copiousness. . . ." The grand and beautiful assemblage of that crossing in my memory is pitiful ferry, scared Parkers, wet gypsies, car.

Like a bloodthirsty Roman emperor, what I did after depositing ourselves in the hotel overlooking lochs and mountains was to station myself at a window where, as long as there was light enough to see, I watched other cars crawl limp, their tails between their wheels, sniffing each inch gingerly, onto that ferry, cross those swift waters, crawl still in goose flesh up the angled incline on the opposite shore, then take at relieved last to the level highway, brave and barking.

And now I wonder how the old Scots woman in Ramsay's "Reminiscences of Scottish Life" would have talked had she started in our Austin Seven to ferry across Loch Leven. A young friend told her she was going to Ireland, in a boat of course. "Weel, noo, ye dinna mean that! Ance I thocht to gang across to tither side o' Queensferry wi' some ither folks to a fair, ye ken; but juist when e'er I pat my fit in the boat, the boat gie wallop and my heart gie a loup, and I thocht I'd gang oot o' my judgment altogether, so says I, Na, na, ye gang awa' by yoursel's to tither side, and I'll bide here, till sic times as ye come awa' back."

ON the next day—no rain, no rain!—along a narrowed Loch Linnhe on a wicked road, made more wicked by a new one being under construction. (See if that rear wheel is still on! . . . Lor, now it must be off! . . . Oooch, we lost three that bump!) to Fort William, once a ragged fragile outpost to keep the Jacobite Highlands in some decent awe of a Hanoverian king in London, now a modern railroad town. That July day its straggly main street was bedecked with flags, and so many Scots kilts and bare knees that our maidenly hearts were a-flutter.

" . . . Oh! our sodger lads look'd braw, look'd braw,
Wi' their tartan kilts, an' a', an' a',
Wi' their bonnets and feathers, an' glitt'rin' gear,
An' pibrochs sounding sweet and clear. . . ."

While waiting for the Duke of York I paid good money to dash up somewhat rickety stairs to gaze wistfully at certain priceless relics of Prince Charlie, including a secret portrait, which looked merely like a daub of paint until you stood in one certain spot, and lo, in a polished cylinder there was the bonnie Prince!

After lunch we took our stand on the curbing and cheered as only democrats could when the Duke of York in Highland costume drove by. I turned to June's diary hoping she had become sufficiently inspired to be worth quoting, but by her penmanship, somewhat illegible at best, I could tell she was at the tail end of writing up exactly one unwritten week. "I had my first glimpse of English royalty." Bah, that is the last time I cross a ferry for her to see a son of the King of England.

The excitement of the town was almost too much for us. ("There's sae muckle rinnin' here and rinnin' there that we're just distrackit") so we wove our way through knees and bagpipes and committees of every detail one could imagine committing, up into one of the rarest, most rewarding glens of Scotland, Glen Nevis. The River Nevis cuts its happy, winding path down the narrow valley which curves between mountains in Scotland one calls towering, Ben Nevis itself to the left the most towering in the British Isles. For ten miles a road leads up and down and over and around river, rocks, crags, waterfalls—a road an uppity car could go just so far on, a road our eager little Austin nosed over, chuckling, when it was scarcely more than a cowpath. We did indeed at times cease our prideful congratulations by allowing two questions to flit through our somewhat riotous brains: 1. Must we keep on over Ben Nevis itself before ever we find a spot where we can turn around? 2. Has any other car been crazy enough to make this trip, and if so, and if it has found a place to turn around, do we meet it coming back? And if so, we keep the left side, the inside, but how much comfort is there in the left side when at times the right side wheels are all but suspended in mid air over a canyon? When there was no longer any road at all, but a



THE FERRY, LOCH LEVEN



GLEN NEVIS

flank of the highest mountain in Great Britain growing ever steeper, rain-swelled falls spilling over great areas of rocky slopes, we left the valiant Austin and proceeded to wade on foot. Then were we rewarded after climbing what June calls "ferocious cliffs" by the sight of most magnificent falls lurching through a wooded gorge. "Prone down the rocks the whitening sheet descends." It roared and crashed in its swollen volume. . . . The agony of it, to leave that region with still so much to explore, not to mention Ben Nevis to climb. . . . The Austin, which had learned much patience, for all that it was so small and young, was waiting high up on a next-to-roadless hillside, its tires laved by the ubiquitous waters from the streaming crevasses of Ben Nevis.

Now came the long sixty-mile run over Spean Bridge in its romantic valley on through the "Great Glen," that strange defile which cuts straight as an arrow diagonally across Scotland from Fort William to Inverness. What a tremendous crack once severed those mountains asunder! Came waters of the earth and heavens to fill it with four long, straight, narrow lochs—Loch Linnhe, Loch Lochy, ten miles long, never more than a mile wide; Loch Oich, four miles long; Loch Ness, twenty-four miles in length, with the River Lochy and twenty-two miles of man-made canal with twenty-nine locks. The pride and wealth of Scotland once went into that Caledonian Canal, to save ships from the long north passage. For the sixty miles we saw one small boat, not another craft of any sort. Modest steamers do ply back and forth on the canal, but we saw none that day. Hardly had the stupendous labors begun by the great engineer Telford been brought to completion than the railroad nosed its black and tortuous way into the Highlands; nor were the locks of a size to handle more modern commercial craft, had it otherwise been an economical proceeding to ship through the canal.

There it cuts its unswerving bee line from Moray Firth

to the last eleven locks into Loch Linnhe, through much of the most beautiful scenery in all Scotland. If you should journey from Banavie on Loch Linnhe to Inverness by steamer there are ruined clan strongholds you would be passing, sights of clan battles, glens and their mountains, islets to be skirting, cliffs and falls for the raised and admiring eyes. At Fort Augustus, almost exactly in the middle of the Great Glen, June and I watched the one boat of the afternoon make two of the five locks—a spanking fine small sail boat with an aristocratic looking Scots Highlander his wife and son, all in Highland kilts and tartans.

A strange sight to come upon in that Highland settlement—it would have appeared out of the ordinary any place in a world where one comes to take ruins more for granted than intact structures—was the new Benedictine Abbey, finishing touches added 1917. An abbey in the Highlands. . . . Monks in the Highlands. . . . The little church which once dotted the base of Meal-fourvonie ahead on the roadway along Loch Ness must have seemed more in keeping with its region. Within those sanctified walls three hundred years ago Mackenzies were worshipping. Macdonalds burnt church and enemy clan while their piper marched around the house of God playing the pibrochs until the flames had made charred ashes of the last Mackenzie.

It is a glorious deeply-wooded road for most of the twenty-four miles along Loch Ness, that lake which to us seemed so deserted. Imagine those miles of perfect water surrounded by wooded hills, here and there a village or a hamlet on its banks, the thriving town of Inverness at its north end, Fort Augustus at the south, and not one craft to be seen, not even a row boat. It was as if the place were bewitched. Yet once Loch Ness was a waterway of parts. Back in ages too dim for historical exactitudes, St. Columba sailed up Loch Ness “against the wind” from the regions of Iona to bring the word of Christ to barbarian Picts. Ever since, boats of commerce, of pleasure, of war have cut along that surface, which in the rawest winters has never been known to freeze.

At Urquhart Castle we rested the Austin and gazed, for it is an especially well done ruin, posed on its cliff below the road against the dark blue lake, with a history going back before the days of its capture by Edward I in the thirteenth century. In the nearby appealing hamlet of Drumnadrochit at the entrance to Glen Urquhart there was a fascinating roadside inn of charm and dignity. There we longed to stop for the night (an angler's inn it is too) and explore that glen, but the fact was we had no money, none at all, and would have none until a bank in Inverness came to our rescue. Queer things, mortals. I find myself every so often dreaming back to that inn against the wooded hillside in Drumnadrochit with a little catch in my ribs because we drove on by. If I pass that way again in this life, shall I recognize the real from what is no doubt the ever-increasing glamour of my dream?

"No money at all." Between us we scraped together just enough to step forth to dissipation that night in Inverness, making the third and last event since we left London—Henry IV, Romeo and Juliet, and—God spare this world on its downward course—"Dark Red Roses." We spent our last pennies and good Scots hours on "Dark Red Roses" because we had read several times that if one wished to realize how far ahead of cheap American productions English films could rise this was the film to see and forever after scorn low importations. I am no judge of "the pictures," it being difficult for me to sit through most of them—indeed my tortured spirit often takes my hand and leads me out in the very middle of an embrace. Animated cartoons I would cross peat bogs on foot to laugh over. Like a wraith I'd flee along a moon-dead road from the average Hollywood talkie. June, however, is one of those modern authorities, able to hold her own in conversation against any of her enlightened peers. (I cannot resist inserting her remark after six months' absence from the United States—ah the music it was to my ears!—that anything to do with herself and the movies should be put in the past tense, since she had lost all interest in the whole industry.) Her opinion and mine

of "a really high class English talkie" agreed. "It turned up (sic) to be melodramatic slush about a jealous husband who nearly cuts off the hands of his supposed wife's lover." ("Supposed" belongs to the lover, if the matter can be considered important enough for corrections and annotations.) In the good old days the sons of the Highlands burned one another to cinders in churches. Three hundred years have brought them to "Dark Red Roses." Besides I resented that cheap intrusion into the historical feel for the north of Scotland sinking into my soul.

WHAT meant most to me in Inverness was not that there in a castle now no more "Makbeth by persuasion of his wife, gathered his friends to counsel . . . where King Duncane happened to be for the time. And because he found sufficient opportunity, he slew King Duncane in the seventh year of his reign." Nor that in Inverness battles innumerable were fought for Scottish independence, for the Highlands against far away royal power, against the Lowlands. A newspaper I casually bought in Inverness was the red letter event to me. Here was I harking back to the old days of the Highlanders, weaving clans in and out and around every glen and strath, mountain and loch we let our eyes rest upon. My imagination was living in the time of tartans and bagpipes, claymores and dirks, stolen cattle and border raids, family feuds and flouted laws, and the centuries when a chief held power of hunt and battle, religion and political loyalties, yea, life and death itself over the clan, his family, spread into what far-flung glen, on the shores of how distant a loch. Suddenly my eye began reading words of that July 30th, 1930, which fairly danced before me.

"CHIEF'S GOLDEN WEDDING"

"On Wednesday afternoon Mackintosh of Mackintosh and Mrs. Mackintosh entertained at Moy Hall the tenantry and employees on the Strathnairn, Strathdearn, Dalcross, and Badenoch districts on the estate, on the occasion of the celebration of their

golden wedding. There was a large gathering, and the Chief and his good lady received and welcomed each guest in front of the mansion-house. The afternoon was cloudy and dull, but the proceedings were bright and happy and characterised by a homely clan feeling appropriate to the occasion. During the afternoon stirring selections were played by the British Legion Bagpipe Band from Inverness.

"After the formal reception the gathering proceeded to the Italian gardens, where an interesting presentation of a golden bowl was made to the chief and Mrs. Mackintosh.

THE CLAN TRADITIONS

"Rev. Norman Mackenzie said: I am honored in being asked to speak on behalf of the tenants of The Mackintosh and Mrs. Mackintosh on this happy occasion . . . We deem it a great pleasure because we are most thankful for having The Mackintosh and his lady with us, in the enjoyment of health and strength and with their accustomed interest in the welfare of all on their estates—(applause). One of the best features of the clan system was the very personal interest which the Chief took in his retainers and it is the carrying on of this fine tradition in our own time which has so greatly endeared The Mackintosh and Mrs. Mackintosh to each and all their tenants—(applause). . . .

A FAMOUS CLAN

"Highlanders have been famed for their loyalty to those whom they respected and honoured, and we all delight today in honoring the great Chief of a famous clan—(applause). From very early times the Clan Chattan has been renowned for the bravery of its men and the dauntless heroism and leadership of its chiefs. . . . All down the centuries chiefs of this clan have led their men with gallantry and valour. . . . Allied with their valour was chivalry, as the following story shows: When Mary Queen of Scots arrived in Inverness in 1562 she was refused admission to the Castle. On learning of the Queen's unprotected state, young Lauchlan MacIntosh, 16th Chief, being in town in attendance upon Queen Mary, at once sent to Donald McWilliam, his tutor, to acquaint him of the Queen's predicament, and next morning, to quote the Kinrara MS., 'the hail name of Clan

Chattan, in Petty, Strathern, and Strathnairn, came to the town, in good order and undertook the Queen's protection until the rest of their neighbors should come'—(applause). . . .

CONGRATULATIONS AND FELICITATIONS

"Rev. Mr. Mackensie then read the following address:—To the Mackintosh and Mrs. Mackintosh of Mackintosh,

We, the undersigned, beg to offer you . . . (etc., etc.) . . . As you have been partakers with us all in all our joys and sorrows, so are we partakers with you both in the feelings of joy and thankfulness to God which the fiftieth anniversary of your marriage calls forth.

We feel, however, that we cannot let this memorable event in your lives and ours pass without expressing the pride which we feel on the achievements which have marked the lives of both of you. . . . But devoted services such as these and others of a similar nature are but what we have learned to expect from Mrs. Mackintosh and The Mackintosh, for both have ever set a high standard of public and private duty before them, as we who live on The Mackintosh Estates know full well. . . ."

(The Bard's poem on the occasion followed.)

"... Mr. Charles Rose . . . whose forbears had been on the estate for over four hundred years, handed the golden bowl to the Mackintosh . . .

THE CHIEF'S REPLY

"Mackintosh of Mackintosh, who had a rapturous reception, said the tenantry and employees had given to his wife and himself a most lovely gift in the golden rose-bowl. . . . He could not help upon an occasion of that kind feeling the absence of a great many old tenants who had gone to their long bourne. He was pleased to see present some of the descendants of those old tenants. . . . Many would remember Davidson of Aultnaslanach, about whom he might relate a story. 'I happened,' said The Mackintosh, 'to be on horseback, along with His Majesty the King, who honours us sometimes by coming to Moy to shoot. His Majesty was also on horseback, and old Davidson happened to be standing at a gate, which he opened for us. His Majesty, addressing him in his quiet and kindly way, said: "I am very much obliged to you. How long have you been here?"' Mr. David-

son, without a moment's hesitation, replied—"About four hundred years, your Majesty." The King, when we had gone on a bit, turned in his saddle and said—"I say, Mackintosh, are all your tenants four hundred years on your estate?" I replied—"I have got one family that can beat that number—one by the name of Mackintosh Kinrea-torrie (the borer). The family have been six hundred years on the estate.'" Continuing, The Mackintosh said the king was greatly surprised. Very few could say the same about their estates nowadays. At the present time, he was afraid, they were all living in the clouds, and what was to happen to the land or the estates no one could tell. But when he looked around and saw them all so well, he congratulated them on their prosperity—(applause). . . .

"Mrs. Mackintosh of Mackintosh, who was applauded, said—Fifty years is a long time when you look back, and we have both seen many changes during those years. But there is one change that has not come—and never will come—and that is our affection and interest in all our people—(applause). . . .

"The gathering was afterwards entertained at tea, etc. . . ."

Ah well, something of the old loyalty was living on! And who would have guessed that the common article as a title could hold such dignity, THE Mackintosh of Mackintosh—infinitely more imposing than the Duke of Mackintosh, Baron Mackintosh! I hoped that he was all decked out in true Highland glory, looking like Boswell's Mr. Macdonald, "completely the figure of a gallant Highlander,"—"He had his tartan plaid thrown about him, a large blue bonnet with a knot of ribband like a cockade, a brown short coat of a kind of duffil, a Tartan waistcoat with gold buttons and gold button-holes, a bluish philibeg, and Tartan hose. He had jet black hair tied behind, and was a large and stately man with a steady sensible countenance."

The hair would not be jet black at a fiftieth wedding anniversary, nor in 1930 would it be tied behind, but it is a fine figure of a man almost any Highlander makes in his kilts. No wonder they suffered anguish of body as well as spirit when after Culloden the Highland Tartans were abolished by law,

and men born to the costume most perfectly suited to their lives, their mountains, their climate, had to compress their brawny Highland "kenees" into tight "breeks."

Nor could I have stumbled across a more appropriate name for re-peopling the Highlands with at least a remnant of old romance, albeit minus its age-old accompaniment of unrest and disorder. No one could figure exactly how far back into dim history Clan Chattan weaves its roots, with the disputes between Macphersons and Mackintoshes as to who should be Chief, won at length by Mackintoshes. Was there a battle which concerned the Highlands from Bannockburn to Culloden when Clan Chattan and the red and green plaid of Mackintosh were not mixed valiantly in the fray? When there were no weighty territorial matters or larger clan feuds to be hacking and shooting over, they indulged in inter-family affairs of sanguinary rivalries and insults. Mackintosh murdered Mackintosh, and there was one beheading, which is something else again, of Mackintosh by Mackintosh.

But the true story of the clan I most relish concerns itself, as what Highland tales at long last do not? with Prince Charlie. Angus Mackintosh in "the Forty-five" was on the side of the government, but his wife, daughter of Farquharson of Invercauld, was a Jacobite. (Ah Prince Charlie did win the women!) It was she took command of the Clan and in person led two battalions to join the Jacobite army at Inverness before the fatal morning of Culloden. In that "last battle on English soil" Angus Mackintosh was taken prisoner, whereupon he was assigned by Prince Charlie to the custody of no other than Lady Mackintosh. (Why waste time at a tame movie?) After the defeat of the Highlanders at Culloden, Prince Charlie made his escape to Moy Hall, ancestral home of the Mackintoshes for centuries, the very Moy Hall of the golden bowl, "amidst the trees by the dark waters of Moy Loch," then guarded by two hundred of the Clan. Lord Loudon marched on Moy to capture the Prince. Again Lady Mackintosh took command. Orders were called in so many loud voices that the govern-

ment troops concluded an enormous Jacobite force must be protecting Prince and stronghold, and retreated in almost a panic. That was the "Rout of Moy," instigated by a Highland Lady. . . .

The Mackintosh of Mackintosh, descendant of an unnumbered line of all but kings, so close to regal was their sway, holding to ancient customs of clan chiefs in this centuries-old Hall, "retaining to this day the independent character which gave the house of Mackintosh its fearless reputation through the Highlands. . . ." English kings could well be proud to hunt at Moy!

Once the wild Mackintosh cry, "Loch-na-Maoidh!" rang along the warpaths of the Highlands. No more the call, no more the number of lusty Mackintosh throats to call. . . . The Mackintosh of Mackintosh owns 124,000 acres in Invernessshire. His tenants know a bond centuries in the forging, in a changed day unbetrayed.

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CHAPTER 17

INVERNESS TO GAIRLOCH TO INVERNESS; THE LOVELIEST THING
IN THE BRITISH ISLES, LOCH MAREE; ON SCOTS FUNERALS,
CULLODEN, CLAVA STONES, CAWDOR CASTLE; RAIN DRENCHED
TO BRIDGE OF ALFORD



I THINK of the trip from Inverness to Gairloch by way of Achnasheen and Loch Maree, and back via Poolewe and Little Loch Broom, as one of the truly glorious memories of five thousand miles.

The diary of the drive over begins: "And was this not one of the grandest days of our summer!" With scant originality the account of the way back bursts forth, "And wasn't this one of the grandest days and trips ever!" I confess to not a thought of clans or history going or coming: my whole being was filled with more than it could comfortably hold from what my eyes alone rested upon. Swiss passes grant vistas of awe-inspiring magnitude in all directions; there are never-to-be-forgotten views in the Bavarian Alps, in the Tyrol; I have glowed with pride and delight at near and far horizons in my own California. Yet never in the space of seventy-five miles going and a hundred and fifty return have I beheld such variety, such contrasts—sweeps of rugged grandeur, glens of wooded loveliness, overpowering treeless wastes. Great stretches of miles on end were barren, dreary, a nature too penurious for man's

comfort, yet the strange deep haunting appeal in the very expanse of mountainous wilderness! One moment the memory of awe, of a land not quite forgotten by a Calvinistic God who must find some satisfaction in anything "so bleak and wild, and mighty in its loneliness," the next, soft fluttering green leaves of birch and larch and alder, the music of rivers we followed, the deeper roar of falls we stopped to glory over; the quiet northern peace of lochs we drove along; the pale faint yellow of a road stretching ahead endlessly, with never a human being to be seen.

"Never?" One must travel farther than northern Scotland for never a human being. Yet in these days of "living thick," "never" is but taking slight liberties with the fact of those miles.

Past Loch Rosque to the crest of the watershed, down Glen Docharty—to what was to me the most beautiful thing of nature we saw in the British Isles, Loch Maree. If you have seen Loch Maree your memory too holds the blue of the lake, the great mass of Slioch, scarred with its rifts and gullies, rising awful to the north, its flat mad top bothered by wisps of grey mist against blue sky; the grey road skirting brown rocks, wet and shiny from the rain, and the contours of hillocks escaped from aged and responsible mountains keeping on one side of the lake their dignified and eternal watch of the other. You too hear the burns rushing rain-filled to the lake, spilling over in falls of riotous abandon. You know the groves of birch and alder, fern and heather. Again you shade the eyes, the better to look up to the rain-washed mountains rising from the road, softened below with their luxury of rich vegetation. A mirthless God flung up the mountainous wastes of Scotland, and left them. Possessed of as many moods, surely, as the speck of a man He created, one day He realized awe alone would never satisfy Him. He must awaken rapture and thanksgiving. Therefore He set to work on Loch Maree, and with a last almost human softness, toward the western end of the lake He

placed the cluster of small islands, heather and fir-clad. Eons later, because of rapture and thanksgiving and awe, man raised a chapel on one of those islands, which crumbled to ruins in a second of creation's time.

A saint died on that island in 721. Queen Victoria once spent a week on Loch Maree. So rarely do queens go any place I would ever be, do anything I would ever do.

At the hotel where the Queen stayed we stopped and had tea. It is almost the only building on the whole lake, bespeaking no royalty, yet extreme Victorian respectability. You feel sure all the ultra-refined-looking guests had forebears who drew up Magna Charta or fought at Flodden Field, on one side or the other. The women were on the whole middle-aged and strangely garbed. One would need to go to Loch Maree, I think, to see such outfits, and all full of fish talk and nothing but fish talk. No one stops at the Loch Maree Hotel except to fish (did the Queen fish?) The walls are fish, stuffed, dated and by whom caught. It would be immensely encouraging if one ever came upon a stuffed fish caught within the lifetime of living man. Rods, baskets, tackle rest in all available corners. Everyone discusses flies in Scotch or Oxford-sounding English.

After Hotel Loch Maree the road was if anything more glorious, woods of birch and pine so thick one could scarce see the blue sky above. . . . From Glen Docharty where first Loch Maree comes to view below, on over Kinlochewe to the twelve miles along the loch—certainly all of that should one not even walk. It must be loitered over, one step forwards, two back. Certainly one should browse along from Loch Maree to Gairloch. On the short bleak upland, bare Ben Baeishven stands guard over wild Loch Batnaskalloch. Here the call to clamber was too strong—we deserted the car and set out, but whether from the rains or the inborn nature of that world, we spent too much time extricating ourselves from bogs. When the road descended through the wild and wooded and romantic Kerrysdale, there indeed did we wedge stones under the wheels and take to the canyon. We could hear the falls roaring from the road, and

down we slid through ferns and firs to a sight of our grandest of Scots cascades.

By the time we reached Gairloch on its sheltered bay looking over the waters to Skye it was as if the soul could hold no more. This, this must wait! Yet who could wait when from one's very bedroom window high over the loch, without half-looking there were the whitewashed cottages snuggling along to the right, golden beach below, rocky cliffs left, small islands ahead, and beyond, hazy, the mountains of Skye purple in the deep pink sunset?

Strange to think these far-away places in the Scottish Highlands have had their share of British Great: Queen Victoria at Loch Maree, and here in Gairloch, far from any railroad, the British Cabinet during a crisis in the Great War found refuge, and held meetings of world importance. . . . War, beyond the peace, the noiseless sunset glow of Gairloch? Troubled ministers in that Highland calm?

The big hotel at Gairloch is also of that ultra-respectable variety—it could have been ready for Queen Victoria, had she arrived, without an extra flick of the dust cloth, without a changed expression on face of servant or guest. If these men coming down for dinner in every costume from tuxedo to plus fours, their British and therefore equally independent wives arrayed in sweaters or evening chiffons, are not all Prime Ministers, it is merely because no country can make use of so many at one time.

CONVINCED that we must leave Skye for another summer, we determined to see as much of it from the mainland as possible. Along the rocky deserted road, made for carts and cows and Austin Sevens, we drove from Gairloch around its bay and south to the coast where we could look across to Trotternish, the northern peninsula of Skye. Farther away, north of us, stretched the island of Lewis. Boswell and Johnson brought

these Western Isles more alive to me in the accounts of their Hebrides tour than many a place I have seen with my own eyes; nor can they have changed a great deal in the last hundred and fifty years. The island then big enough for exactly three sheep surely today can hold no more, and if three sheep are still upon it, no doubt they comport themselves as sheeply in 1930 as in 1773. The worst of it is the climate is exactly the same.

Not that we had a word to say against the climate as we looked across to the Western Isles. The day held that tricky dramatic quality whereby you stood in sunshine, and islands and mountains appeared black and clear. When we reached the point which gave a maximum of views in all directions we stopped and sat in the sun and ran about in the sun and looked . . . and looked. . . . "Ahead Skye," wrote June, "loomed out of the calm water like a ghost, and far in the back of us rose the mountains, one of the most impressive sights I have ever seen." It was a still, breathless morning when you could imagine a son of the Western Isles becalmed and praying, "O Lord, we pray thee to send us a wind; no a rantin', tantin', tearin' wind, but a nookin', soughin', winnin' wind." Below on the shore lapped the surf. "The sounds of the western sea are aye such as can be understood of the folk. They foretell good weather and bad, birth and death in the township, the drowning of dear ones on faraway shores. . . . Perhaps other seas have voices for other folk, but the western sea alone can speak in the Gaelic tongue and reach the Gaelic heart. . . . And if the sea-sounds are sweet to the islesman at home, they are sweeter still when by faith he hears them in the heart of the mainland, with the unfeeling mountains closing him in. . . . A few years ago a young Skyeman working in Glengary succeeded, by sleight of heart, in glorifying a very tiny waterfall into a mighty sea. 'I sit in the heather and close my eyes, and me-thinks the waterfall is the western sea—and, O man of my heart, my heaven and my folk are in that music. . . .'"

On our way back along the coast we found ourselves lodged behind a Scots funeral, and a Scots funeral is one of the solid facts of this earth which cannot be gotten around. Death is death, and all the traffic of the British Isles can bide the time it takes a long slow-moving line of Highland men "dressed in black clothes, creased and ill-fitting, with hats, grown brown with years of church going, and with following funerals in the rain" to reach the kirk, carrying the simple wooden coffin at their head. On the signal from the leader, every few yards a fresh group moved up and bore the weight of the dead, those relieved turning back to the end of the line. We tried stopping altogether, and reading and knitting. Never did that black line get farther than a short spurt ahead. Three American boys in shirtsleeves, light-headed to see the sun and wont to stop at nothing short of a London traffic policeman, were beside themselves to know what to do about a Scots funeral. Enough of them might teach the soul resignation—or in the meantime one would emigrate to the United States.

Funerals acquire odd local traditions unto themselves, changing only slowly through the years. It was plain Gairloch no longer indulged in what was once the accepted funeral intemperance and conviviality. Evidently only men attend Highland funerals. Ramsay tells of an old time funeral properly begun by allowing each guest to drink as much as the occasion warranted before starting the journey with the coffin to the kirk ten miles distant. By the time the procession reached the churchyard, the grave digger was chilled through and weary and impatient with his waiting, and the cold and short November day was almost over. "Now man," called the leading mourner, "fast as you can with the spade!"—And lo, there was no coffin, no deceased Miss Ketty. You can imagine the sort of search somewhat unsteady mourners made among their rather dazed ranks. Where was the coffin? Who was carrying it last? ... Miles back the throng had stopped at a friendly inn to "bend weel" to yet another whisky, balanced Miss Ketty on a dyke, and had marched on the remaining miles without her.

Ramsay in his own day remarked the change in funeral customs. Earlier, when the Laird of Dundonald died in Inverness, after a proper open house of three days eating and drinking, the corpse started its procession toward the west coast for burial—the trip we had made in some eight hours of driving. People “followed in multitudes” to give it partial convoy, and all of them must needs be entertained with food—and drink—along the way. “It took altogether a fortnight to bury poor Dundonald . . . the last of the real grand old Highland funerals.” When Ramsay himself attended the Duke of Sutherland’s funeral the procession was a mile long, seven thousand persons were furnished with bread and beer—“but not one glass of whisky was allowed on the property that day!”

Then came the long drive back to Inverness. Soon after leaving the coast we halted spellbound before the sight of a lake below us. Next to Loch Maree—dare one say next to Loch Maree it was the most beautiful lake we had seen? This must be photographed. I called back to June to locate it on the map while I took pictures. Balanced on a rock I heard her call, “Mom! It’s Loch Maree!” Which indeed it was from a new angle.

Sometimes we drove along the shores of sea lochs, blue and broadening to the distant Hebrides, sometimes the road skirted wild lochs inland. Now and then we stopped to peer over cliffs at rocks strangely formed, or to yearn after gently-curved sandy beaches, no human being to disturb our dreams of ownership. We rounded western bays, hill-circled; we pulled up steep ways cut along the sides of mountains, at times out of solid rock, to gaze breathless at loch and mountain stretched on either side beneath us. There came the vast high mountain moorland of Dundonnell Deer Forest without a tree, where the road bore its one pale cut through wild lonely waste lands, great mountains rising left, right, ahead, one abandoned cabin in miles of driving. Twice in that stretch we passed the equivalent for our day and age of the abandoned prairie wagon of the “’49ers” and the bleached bones of their horses. Each time as

THE MOUNTAINS OF
GAIRLOCH SEEN
FROM THE COAST



THE ONLY HABITA-
TION, DUNDONNEL
DEER FOREST



BRIDGE
OF
ALFORD



LOCH
MARRE

we looked ahead it was as if our eyes beheld the rotting carcass of some mastodon. On near approach both were abandoned automobiles of years gone by, enough of their weathered skeletons left to show the lines of models long outdated. Wood and cloth and leather had worn away as if pecked by giant vultures, gnawed over by a strange breed of hyenas. What tales to weave around those cars in such a wilderness! We ourselves in this more-traveled age passed two human beings in that whole deserted region of Dundonnel Deer Forest. There came along a caravan with one lone man on the front seat, who asked us if his lumbering craft would make the roads we had traversed; and one inhabitant of nearby parts mending a bit of roadway. Woe betide a car with troubles in such a world! In the days when cars of those old makes came to grief, who now knows why? there surely was no garage short of Inverness, seventy-five miles away, and probably no facilities there for rescuing a far-distant wreck. The miles on end to wander afoot before the first habitation could be reached!

It was a stirring, a magnificent, a solemn experience, that drive across Dundonnel Deer Forest. . . .

For a mile or so near Braemore we thought we had reached pleasant wooded glens again. Such pleasant wooded glens as we had driven through before those moorlands! There was indeed a road which led down that gorge of Corrie Halloch, with the River Broom flowing in leaps and bounds to its sea loch, but that road was not ours. We turned inland along the woods of Braemore up the Pass of Dirrie Moore, narrow and wild and bare, again no living thing to be seen but sheep

“ . . . that sprattle on
In a lang line, sae braw;
Or lie on yon cauld cliffs aboon,
Like late-left patch o’ snaw.”

By Loch Droma and over the summit there began as strange a drive as we had all summer, through a bleak, brown, almost level valley, a river rushing along to our right, mountains on

either side, one lone inn, one speeding aristocratic limousine—Ministers going fishing, we knew!—and by then the rain descending in torrents. June drove twenty such miles, to the good of her ego and the weariness of her body and soul. At Garve our road joined the one we had taken to Gairloch, and there were trees, and a delightful inn with a Scots high tea and salmon salad before we journeyed the main road back to Inverness.

Now it seems an odd thing to me that I never once planned to write a book about our summer trip. At the time, traveling the superficial way we did, I had thought there was not enough to the three months to begin to write a book about our low-brow miles. Yet here I sit in utter despair because, when I come to give some faint idea of our few days in Scotland, it would be so easy to fill a volume.

Take just that next day after our return from Gairloch—what we packed into that one day! And lo, when I have done with it, we are still but one-third done with Scotland. I must leave out more. Yet it is a trying business picking and choosing when a diary begins: "Oh what a day, what a day!" The night before, there being no garage near where we at last found rooms in Inverness, we left the car on the lawn. One becomes trusting of necessity with a car which cannot be locked in any way and a back seat filled with luggage free for the world to help itself unto. We parked that car in all sorts of uncouth places, we left that luggage totally unguarded, times without number. Never was a thing touched all summer. As I listened to the pourings of the night I wondered if the Austin would flood off its lawn, or would merely our belongings of the back seat float away? All the next day it poured and poured and poured, on and on and on we drove.

The Scots, you know, refer to most of their rains as "mists." I don't understand just where the line is drawn. That day, in plain English, was mist plus downpour, both in such generous quantities it necessitated a calling from our depths of

something of the same grace—nay, heroism!—the Scots need for the resigned and successful acceptance of their climate. An Englishman once lost his patience, as that day I could have done. "What a d—d mist!" "What ails ye at the mist sir? It weets the sod, it slockens the yowes (ewes) and—it's God's wull." But as far as Neil Munro in his poem of "The Exiles" I could not go:

"Are you not weary in your distant places,
Far, far from Scotland of the mist and storm,
In drowsy airs, the sun-smite on your faces,
The days so long and warm?

... We tread the miry roads, the rain-drenched heather,
We are the men, we battle, we endure!
God's pity for you people in your weather
Of swooning winds, calm seas, and skies demure! . . ."

Such pity for those on whom the sun shines is asking too much of a body not born in the heather—rain-drenched heather.

"Off first to Culloden Moor and read about it there in the rain."

Culloden Moor. . . . Did we know there was such a place, had we ever heard of the battle, before the summer of 1930? What matter? By the time we looked upon those scattered stones marking where each clan's own had fallen, it had become one of the Decisive Battles of the World for us. Not even all the Highlands were united under the banner of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden against England, the Lowlands, others of the Highlands. There was no reason why a fair-haired Stewart of twenty-five should be restored to the throne of England, Scotland and Wales—none except that the Highlands adored him and wanted him there. The Highlands had fought many a battle for a cause no better if as good, and deserted back to their mountain glens in alarming and history-making numbers before their foes were thoroughly vanquished, or their conquerors fully victorious.

The Detail of Culloden which stirs my marrow with the worth of it is the fact that after the Duke of Cumberland had won his victory over famished and exhausted rebels and had butchered the wounded where they lay with wholesale atrocities; after the break-up of the whole clan system by one blow of Hanoverian decree; after the chaos and instability, the loosening of morale which follows defeat, and victory, Prince Charlie could wander the Highlands, a fugitive pursued from every side, a price of £30,000 (\$150,000) on his head, and his whereabouts ever known to any number of poverty-stricken, and not so poor, Highlanders to whom £30,000 would mean a fortune beyond reckoning, yet not one man betrayed the whereabouts of the Prince. The most valiant story of all concerns the Prince, once forced to seek refuge in the hut of a Highlander who had fought on the other side, against him. Yet such was that peasant's sense of Highland honor, not even he would betray the defeated Stewart.

It was a long jump from the Culloden of 1746 to the Clava Stones of the days of Stonehenge. Part of the fun of wandering Scotland consisted in seeing a country not yet, outside a few centers, on the tourist map. When you want to find something off the beaten path you "jolly well" hunt for it, which also means that when you find it, you have your treasure to yourself. Had I not a desire born of anthropological enthusiasms too deep to forego for a sight of four thousand year old burial mounds, I never should have kept on searching for them up one deserted road and down another. Finally one human being came along in the downpour carrying a pail of wild raspberries. I asked him if he knew anything about Clava Stones. No, he'd never heard of them, but then he hadn't been in that region long. When soon after to my joy I did discover their whereabouts—mounds now emptied of the dead and their necessities in another world, encircled by hoaring standing stones—the drenched raspberry bushes round about showed plainly the man who knew nothing of those stones had been gathering his berries from their very midst.

I begin to feel like our Winston Churchill who titled all his novels with a C: Culloden, Clava Stones, and now Cawdor Castle. Again what a search to find where Shakespeare with a flourish of his untrammelled pen had Macbeth slay Duncan. It is where he should have slain him—in a castle on the edge of a rock over Cawdor Burn, towered and turreted, gabled and battlemented, woodlands round about, a garden of gardens between walls and ancient drawbridge. The only trouble is that it was not built when Macbeth slew Duncan.

There is a fine old tale which does belong to Cawdor, fit for Shakespeare if ever he had a plot to order. When the last of the line of Calder, descendants of Macbeth's brother to whom he resigned the Thanedom of Calder or Cawdor when he ascended the throne, was but a child, and a girl child, John of Lorn, head of Clan Campbell, decided she would make a valuable possession. A band of Campbells swooped down upon Cawdor Castle, John among them, and bore her off. Her nurse fled shrieking to spread the alarm. Cawdors—or Calders—to the rescue! And rescued she would have been had not a Campbell hit upon the idea of turning over a great camp kettle as if to conceal the heiress of the Cawdors, and there he left his seven sons to guard it to the death. The rest made on with their prize. There followed a mad fight between the uncles from Cawdor Castle and their following, and the seven stalwart sons—until the seventh and last was slain. When the kettle was turned over—no Mariella, who by that time was far away in Argyle. . . . John of Lorn married the heiress when she reached a marriageable age, thereby falling heir to Calder, which became Cawdor, and Campbell property it is to this day. Wrote June: "It was closed because of the preparations being made for the arrival of its young master, his bride, and a month-old baby. But that gave me a thrill, to think of a baby being brought up in such surroundings! . . . It is the most medieval appearing castle I have seen."

Near Forres you can let your mind play creepily around Macbeth's "weird sisters" on their "blasted heath" or you can

be on the lookout for Sweno's Stone which is supposed to commemorate some victory or other of close to a thousand years ago. But, though its slim runic-covered shaft rises twenty-three feet, what with eating "caastle tomaatoes" bought across the burn from Cawdor Castle, and the torrents of rain, we failed to note it. If ever I near Forres again I shall connect the region with Carr's experience of 1807. I welcome an excuse to be thinking about anything which makes human nature out so kindly. Carr lost his way near Forres and black night came on. Finally in despair he knocked at the door of a dark cabin, since some direction he must come by or himself spend the night on a blasted heath. A man poked his half-asleep and inquiring head around the door. "What's u wull?" Carr explained his predicament. With no other covering than his night shirt (I take it from deep international experience it was his day shirt as well) the Scotsman insisted upon walking beside Carr's horse one mile, to make sure he got upon the right road. Not only did he refuse all payment for his services, but seemed hurt that Carr should offer any.

That story can serve as antidote when one looks upon the granite stone along the Forres roadside where once witches were burnt.

If a car (it is confusing, this quoting Carr and our car—I should refer to Carr as "Sir John") carries one all too hastily about a country, instead of moaning over lost chances for ardent foreign intimacies, it is possible to dwell with satisfaction on the thought of what one would be missing entirely were the journeying being done by train. It may be no coincidence that the increasing reconsideration of the doctrine of Free Will and the growing use of the small automobile for touring are simultaneous. A train has to keep on tracks. The driver of a Rolls-Royce has only a bit of a chance to exercise free will, compared to the person with hands on the steering wheel of an Austin Seven. "Where thou goest I will go," can be said to any road. Either the small car driver in the British Isles exercises free will or there would have to be one god for traffic problems

only. If every sudden turn we made from one road onto another was predetermined . . . but if my desire to cut down the length of this account of British wanderings is honest, and it is, we shall not be delving into philosophies. My method of leading up to an animal fair does not seem to be direct, any more direct than the roads we took to get there. How horribly and pathologically deep must be my antipathy to straight thoroughfares!

One of my vivid memories of Scotland is the approach to Dufftown. There was no reason why we should be approaching Dufftown at all except that our marked route from Inverness to Aberdeen had proven lamentably direct and trafficked, and therefore grated on our nerves, so that we were now wandering happily and ignorantly in a downpour, we cared not particularly whither. The road was wooded, wet and winding. When the first small boy, dressed in his best and dripping, and leading home a black and beribboned and dripping pony, came into view we merely thought, what a clean boy and clean pony. Having had much experience with boys, which emboldened me to generalize therefore about ponies without having had any experience with the latter, I knew it took more than even a Scots rain to wash them that clean. A very clean boy on a week day and such a clean pony. . . . By the time we reached Dufftown where the fair had been held—surely nothing ever gets postponed in Scotland on account of weather—we had passed innumerable very clean and very dripping small boys, each leading a clean and dripping black pony, some beribboned, others— But I cannot bear to think of the unberibboned. I could tell a difference in the small boys—no two looked alike except that all were soaked to the skin. I'd have pinned blue ribbons on some, white on others, red on others—but there wasn't a one not worth a satin rosette. Every wet black pony looked to me the image of every other wet black pony, but then no one had appointed me ribbon pinner on anything. Very clean and very dripping men we passed leading very clean and dripping great horses—oh, pin ribbons on every one of the beautiful beasts! And some dripping men led the cleanest cows

I ever laid eyes on. Our Austin was by then completely broken to cows, but we felt it shy ever so little at the first clean cow in its experience.

Up over a Scots pass—how we loved them in their bare wildness!—and down the other side lost in woods so glorious we had little desire to find our way out. There came the most desolate pass of the summer, bare, drenched, with a mist settling around us which allowed for no sight whatever of what lay more than a few yards ahead, and mile after mile not a living thing to be seen, except as you might imagine a sinister form approaching in the mist, only to find it a stone. The wind blew with such force care was necessary to keep the small car steady, yet it roared through the mist, never driving it away. For once all our protections against rain were unable to keep us dry—the deluge washed right into the car. We were cold; we were wet; we were more or less lost, except for a vague feeling that the mist-shrouded, rain-drenched road must be leading south. Now and then in the manner of a cruel coquette the mist lifted just enough to let us know that, had we been able to see more, right and left were stretches of purple heather in full bloom. . . . It was dinner time—we had passed no spot that day for tea—when the mist thinned enough for us to make out a valley below, with a river rushing swollen through it. Beside that river and beside the road—did anything ever look so good to our wet and weary souls,—“O we’re wat, wat, O we’re wat and wearie!”—as the Forbes Arms Inn at Bridge of Alford!

It was the most spotless and attractive of fishing inns, with a bright well-tended garden sloping down to the mad river. It was the typical fishing inn managed with pride of family possession going back several generations, the guests perennial fisher-folk who would go no place else though they had their world to choose from. As at Tal-y-Llyn Lake, all sat at one big table. In a friendly way we were incorporated into the genial fishing conversation as platter after platter of steaming food made its way up and down the board. Genial, aye,

and not so genial conversation. There was a good bit of broad Scotch from one side to the other of the broad table over whether two sons should go fishing that wild night with the one last possession of some precious-as-pearls and rare-as-rubies kind of winged bait belonging to one of the brothers. Its unspellable Scots name sounded to me as if there could have been only this single specimen since the world began. Father in broad Scots talk laid down the law that the quite grown sons should not go out on such a night. Did he get glared upon! Mother sat at the head of the table between sons and father, the pretty, pink-cheeked, grey-haired thing, apparently unmoved by a situation which would have broken my spirit years gone by.

The next morning at breakfast the atmosphere up that end of the table, except for the gay mother pouring tea for all of us, was such that food curled at the edges. It seems father had taken that one alluring treasure and gone fishing with it himself. If looks of sons could turn a father's skin, that man's face would have become a deep green or lavender before our very eyes. At least they were not letting him forget that he had lost the bait with the first cast, the swollen river having sucked the priceless tempter under log or rock or banks where it had adhered before eager five-pound trout could brush one another aside to be at it, and winged jewel-beyond-price and leader had done their bit, as pointed out by the sons, to show that some place in this world justice reigns. "And now," announced mother beaming, "come along to church. It will do all three of you good."

Plaster cracked some place in the Alford church that morning. But by that time, sun shining, hills of purple heather behind us, we were driving along on the most perfect road ever laid to Aberdeen.

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CHAPTER 18

A PERFECT SCOTS SABBATH WHICH SHOULD HAVE LANDED OUR PAGAN SOULS IN BRIMSTONE. FROM ABERDEEN UP THE DEE VALLEY OVER CAIRNWELL PASS ON TO BLAIR ATHOLL—ALL IN SUNSHINE



ABERDEEN is a city to behold! We had thought to ignore the place altogether, with our ever-present dubious attitude toward cities, our certainty of happiness on a country road. And the sun was shining in Scotland! Most of the guests at the Bridge of Alford inn hailed from Aberdeen, including the sons who had murdered their father as he came out of church on Sunday, August third, 1930. Or since church murders take well (vide T. à Becket) let us have father murdered in church. Which reminds me that I wish I had time to give the full conversation of two dazed and outraged English women behind me after a performance of "Play-boy of the Western World" by the Irish Players in London. "If I'd ever have guessed from the title . . . and to hear people in an audience laugh . . . and all about a son murdering his father—the whole play! Some one ought to stop it! . . ." However—the guests, as begun to be mentioned, hailing for the most part from Aberdeen, could hardly eat their Sunday breakfast for the amount of conversation they expended on us in the nature of arguments as to why without fail Aberdeen should be beheld.

To our feeble, "Next time we come to Scotland, surely . . ." the universal outburst was, "Aye but you'll never see Aberdeen as you'd see it this morning, the sun shining on it after a rain!" showing a canny Aberdeen honesty about the sun.

Which is the time to see that "granite city," gleaming, nay almost dazzling. It must always appear clean and well-mannered and well-done, with such a beach for a modernized up-and-coming city to possess at its very door step! It was more than our pagan hearts could bear that on a glorious sunny August morning practically not one soul was on that beach, because forsooth it was the Sabbath. A stranger in Scotland one Sunday asked a passing native the name of a castle on a nearby hill. "It's no the day to be speering sic things!" was all the information he got. We should not have been so much as "speering" Aberdeen's beach.

These days of "stravaiging" Scotland and my good old diary—what would a Scots God have said to the first sentence of that Sabbath? "Of all the glorious divine perfect days and trips!" . . . And none of it spent in the kirk.

From Aberdeen we took a faultless road along the south bank of the Dee up that valley of castles, hamlets, woods, villages, tempting glens, and loveliness every foot. We all accumulate corners we are surely returning to some day. One of mine is Brig-o'-Feugh in the Dee Valley with its inn, its tree-sheltered cottages, its old arched bridge spanning the tumultuous Feugh—

"Folks come frae far to thrang the Brig
When kelpie spates wid dance a jig,
To see the Feugh gang roarin' by
And watch the salmon loupin' high . . ."

A sunny day in Scotland plays extra havoc with you. That Sunday there were a dozen places we yearned to bide in, and yet, with the sun shining, we felt we had to see the whole country from end to end in the wonder of it. We did stop on a wild stretch of the Dee north of Balmoral. Had it not been

the Sabbath surely fishermen would have been standing thigh deep in that perfect trout and salmon stream. We sat in the sun on a ledge above a bend of the river, thickly wooded hills all about us, and June knitted that sweater while I read Morton aloud. Which we should have missed doing probably had we been royalty on our way to visit the King and Queen at Balmoral. We always pronounced Balmoral incorrectly until we came upon a bit of inspired verse which put us right:

"... Long may she (which was Queen Victoria) be spared to
roam

Among the bonny Highland Floral,
And spend many a happy day
In the palace of Balmoral."

Between Ballater and Balmoral is a stretch of country to make the heart rejoice—a valley and river of loops and turns, and woods, and hills covered with heather, purple heather, spilt everywhere. I could think of only that awful bromide: "If you saw that in a picture—" But it was true! How could we have known a whole hillside would be solid purple? . . . And the castles we passed that day. . . .

At Braemar we stopped and had tea at the Invercauld Arms, June has it "among busts of Caesar and portraits of Queen Victoria." I would shout that Braemar is a place one should headquarter, for you are already well up in the mountains—over a thousand feet elevation is high indeed for a village in the British Isles—and in every direction mountains and glens tempt the spirit. Yet Scotland needs to read "Bambi." Deer forests near Braemar mean only restricted rambles. There are whole districts up and down Scotland shut off to traffic when the hunting season opens—we both no doubt should be shot through and buried by now had we persisted in seeing what we saw when The Season was on.

My Scots enthusiasm gets a little the better of me about Braemar. In the first place, I know of no way to reach it which would not make you clap your hands for the appeal of it. It

is an aesthetic duty to drive to Braemar, even if you do not stop. Then Braemar touches a tender spot in me which will forever now, since the summer of 1930, be Scots. Part of it is historical—the sort of history one does not weigh as a disinterested student but gets het up over as a biased patriot (self-imposed). Take your choice—cold blooded you can dwell on the fact that down in London a dumpy Hanoverian named George sat on the throne, which by then meant King of Scotland as well as England—the union took place in 1707. He could not speak a word of English, had “blousy foreign women for his mistresses . . . and no redeeming touch of wit, generosity, or nobleness of soul.” (That is the historian Trevelyan.) Of course my Highlands will not have him! The Earl of Mar calls a meeting of the clans under the guise of a great hunt at Braemar in 1715, the point being they will restore a Stewart to the throne.

“The Highland men, frae hill and glen
Wi’ belted plaids and glittering blades
Wi’ bonnets blue and hearts sae true,
Are comin’ late and early.”

Which will you have, the dumpy German with his blousy foreign women, or our James?

On the site where now stands the Invercauld Arms, the Earl of Mar raises the blue standard of the Highlands. You never saw a Stewart . . . I never saw a Stewart . . . 99-9/10’s per cent of those assembled never saw a Stewart. “The King over the water!” “James VIII, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland!” The Braes of Mar are thick with the “rude splendor” of wild Highland clansmen gathered from far and near. . . . The ships the all-powerful King of France sends over to help the cause against his enemy England hear the pop of English guns and scuttle around back home again . . . Sheriffmuir—must it be Sheriffmuir that with all its hodge-podge of indecisiveness brings to their gloryless end the high hopes and gallant effort begun at Braemar?

"There's some say that we wan,
 And some say that they wan,
 And some say that nane wan at a', man;
 But ae thing I'm sure,
 That at Sheriffmuir,
 A battle there was, that I saw, man;
 And we ran, and they ran; and they ran, and we ran;
 And we ran, and they ran awa, man."

Where is our Stewart king? After his cause is practically lost he lands in Scotland, and turns out to be a poor, chilling, all but stupid piece of majesty—at least to us who are not disinterested historians. He is crowned at Scone—shades of David the First and the Bruce!—and (we didn't like him anyhow) he ran away back to France one night with the Earl of Mar.

Yet for all that, did anyone ever write a poem for the dumpy George like "It was a' for our rightful King"?

"... Now a' is done that men can do,
 And a' is done in vain ...
 When day is gane, an' night is come,
 An' a' folk bound to sleep,
 I think of him that's far awa'
 The lee-lang night, an' weep, my dear,
 The lee-lang night, an' weep."

What warrior ever wept at thought of George I?

And that was "the Fifteen," which began right here at Braemar. "The Forty-five" and James' red-haired freckled son Charles is thirty years away.

And because no good came of any of it, because of the Lost Cause of the Highlands and the glamour their history, their mountains, their dress, their pibrochs have thrown about them, there is the third appeal of Braemar. Alas, I know it only in my imagination—the August Braemar Gathering. I would cross from America to see it, but since I have not seen it I make bold to quote a few lines from H. V. Morton who has:

"The Braemar Gathering is about to begin. The hills fling

back the sound of pipes. Old men who yesterday were seen plodding round in coats and trousers are suddenly transfigured. Majesty and nobility have descended on them. They do not walk: they stride. . . . You can go all over the world but you will never see the male more splendidly arrayed. The swing of the kilt is the declaration of independence: it is the symbol of aristocracy. . . . The destruction of the clan system and the stamping out of the national dress was part of the appalling cruelty with which the Whig Government followed up Butcher Cumberland's victory over Charles Edward at Culloden. . . . Those who were suspected of an attempt to evade the law were hauled before the authorities and forced to take the following horrible oath:

“‘I swear as I shall answer to God at the great day of judgment, I have not, and shall not have, in my possession any gun, sword, or arms whatsoever, and never use tartan, plaid, or any part of the Highland garb, and if I do so may I be accursed in my undertakings, family, and property; may I never see my wife, nor children, nor father, mother, or relations; may I be killed in battle as a fugitive coward, and lie without Christian burial in a foreign land, far from the graves of my forefathers and kindred. May all this come upon me if I break this oath.’

. . . “If the eye carries away from Braemar the undying memory of the kilt, what of the ear? From early morning until late evening the pipes come sobbing or shouting over the hills, now in an ecstasy of sorrow, now in a scream of triumph. The piper in a city street is a misfortune, but pipers marching with the wind over a hill send the blood to the head and make fingers itch for a sword. . . . They are not so much something in the air as something deep in the heart. . . .

“Lassies in kilts dance flings, their silver medals shining on velvet jackets thick as buttons on a ‘pearlie’s’ coat, ancient men with white beards and faces the colour of old mahogany fling off their tunics and stand braced against the weight of the caber, brawny young Highlanders twirl round rapidly like dancing dervishes and put the weight. . . . Pipers strut here and

there . . . or, standing still and beating time with a buckled shoe, send over the hillsides of Braemar the wild and solemn elegy of the pibroch.

"But all this stops suddenly. The news comes that the royal procession has started from Balmoral. . . . There is a great parade of Tartan over the hill, the flash of claymores, and the preliminary squeal of pipes. Then the royal carriages come softly over the grass, there is much Royal Stuart tartan, much bowing, and royalty is led to a rustic arbor to take the salute of the clans. This is the great moment of the Braemar Gathering. The clansmen come on the field with drums beating, banners waving, and the skirl of the war pibrochs. . . . First come the Balmoral men in Stuart tartan carrying Lochaber axes, then the Duffs with their ancient pikes, then the Farquharsons, each man bearing a flashing claymore. As they come to the saluting base the chieftains lift their sword-hilts to their lips, then down in military salute.

" 'Eyes left! ' "

"And what an array of tanned faces is turned to royalty! Young and old are in the march past, but it is the old that one notices because they look like patriarchs who have walked from some antique saga.

"If you slightly close your eyes you can visualize a rougher, wilder gathering on the Braes o' Mar, and you know what that furious infantry was like which flung away their muskets after the first volley and leapt sword in hand on the bayonets at Culloden. And the lesson of the Braemar Gathering? Is there one? If so it is that something heroic and noble went out of life when the last colony of Celts gave way before the modern world. . . .

"Until darkness falls the clansmen stand at cottage doors brave in the tartan, which comes out once a year. . . . The drone of the bagpipe comes out of the dusk. Braemar, it seems, is unwilling to let the old times go. Night falls; and tomorrow the pagan gods will walk the earth as ordinary men in trousers."



DEE VALLEY, SCOTLAND



NEARING BRAEMAR

We ourselves in this standardized twentieth century are loath to let pagan gods go.

The way south from Braemar leads over the highest traveled road in Great Britain, Cairnwell Pass (2199') mountain-guarded, stream-watered, heather-clad, and on the other side over the famed Devil's Elbow, which is a steep zig-zag you are just as glad to be done with. Down Glen Beg to the Spittal of Glenshee, once a shelter for travelers in the old days of foot and horse going, now its inn unduly tempting, yet on such a cloudless day no stop could be considered as early as six o'clock.

Indeed from six on came almost the loveliest and most rewarding going of that altogether perfect day. "On and on and on, speeding away an oh so happy, to Bridge of Cally where we turned up a most beautiful and peaceful and wooded Sunday valley, the Ardlie Water on our left. Oh, the trees and slopes and quiet homes and late afternoon stillness! How one can love Scotland! . . . Up and up over yet another moorland pass (1260') with a most magnificent view of Perthshire, the hazy blue Grampians, lofty, far ahead to our right, valleys, hills, other lesser mountains wherever the eyes rested—and purple heather. May I never forget that sight. We stayed the Austin long on the summit, and never a car to pass us in either direction. . . On down . . . down . . . down to a village, Moulin, where we attempted to stop at an attractive hotel in a sudden bend of the road—full. Farther down in Pitlochry we decided while the world was so glorious to drive on to Pass of Killiecrankie—perfect road and time of day and trees and stillness. Tried to stop at Hotel Bridge of Tilt—full.

("Whaur ye gaun to sleep?"

"I dinna ken, sir, but Providence is aye kind, an' 'll provide a bed.")

"Decided must keep driving on because road so heavenly and world so beautiful and lo, handsome Blair Atholl with its prosperous grey stone Tudor Atholl Arms Hotel. Full! (Guide book—"Blair Atholl last village of any size passed for many miles.") The hotel got us two good rooms in the station house

facing gay hotel gardens. . . . I took loveliest walk in dusk over bridge across River Tilt and up steep hill to where I could look down over wee village with lazy smoke from its neat grey stone cottages in gardens and lights here and there, and on beyond Atholl Castle and its forests; directly below, the river, and right and left and ahead thickly wooded hills. Was I happy! . . . Down to my sleeping June" and a dreadful innocent looking 1929-'30 small grandson clock in the hall outside my door which justified its catalogue price by enthusiastic and vivacious and thorough chimings every fifteen minutes all night.

Press my pen onwards before I stop to tell what I know about the Pass of Killiecrankie and "Bonnie Dundee," and the Dukes of Atholl. The Duchess crossed from America on our steamer, her peace ruined by a continual bombardment from a quite dreadful female organization traveling to Europe en bloc, to the mortification of every American soul not a professional joiner of societies to improve the world. They were unable to spend nine days on the ocean without having meetings and speeches! They turned the Entertainment for Seamen's Widows and Orphans into speeches. As if their bosomed oratory would loosen purse strings! And in between they sought the patient well-bred Duchess of Atholl to ask her Personal Opinion on every phase of Uplift. "The Murrays of Atholl have been a power in the land since the time of David I—twelfth century. . . . The Duke is the only British subject permitted to retain a standing army (the Atholl Highlanders) at the head of which he marches to open the Highland Gathering held in the second week in September in a field near the castle." At Blair Castle the family has entertained a king and a queen—Mary Queen of Scots at that!—and Montrose and Cromwell and Dundee, and Prince Charlie gave a ball there. That much I had to tell.

CHAPTER 19

A SCOTS MONDAY WHICH NEARLY WASHED US AWAY; LOCHS, CASTLES, PASSES AND GLENS. WE SIGH OVER MARY'S DAMP BIRTHPLACE, AND FOLLOW HER AFFAIRS IN STIRLING AND EDINBURGH. SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD TO DRYBURGH, LOVELIEST OF BORDER ABBEYS. FLODDEN FIELD AND THE END. FOR US, OF SCOTLAND



“**M**ONDAY, August 4th, Blair Atholl to Bridge of Allan. Ah me. One lovely day sandwiched in between the two rainiest of God's earth. It poured a deluge all day long!”

Yet it was the old story, in that not even a Scots downpour could spoil the beauty of the Scots world. There is a valley from Ballinling to Aberfeldy, Strath Tay, which is as appealingly lovely as anything of its kind in Great Britain, even in a downpour. Bearing in mind that we had crossed on the same boat with a Duchess we stopped at Castle Taymouth for tea. Wrote Carr in 1807: “His Lordship is building a new house upon the ancient house of Taymouth. . . Hills thickly covered with stately trees rise before and behind it.” . . . Says the 1927 guide book: “Tay Castle, with provisions for golf, tennis, boating, shooting and fishing, now a hotel, retaining much of its baronial magnificence both outside and inside in finely wooded grounds, is the early 19th cent. successor of a

mansion built c. 1573 by Colin Campbell of Glenorchy.... R. 12/6...pens. fr. 25/...." "Orchestra for tea!" note Parkers. Not since Lyons Corner House and the Berkeley in London had we hearkened to an orchestra—2/11 for all we could eat at Lyons, 12/10 for tomato salad and iced coffee at the Berkeley. Twice as many in the Lyons orchestra, playing three times as often. This is technically known as a digression. So, "Orchestra for tea!" and gilt and upholsteries and baronial this and that. "It was fun.... On for miles beside Loch Tay, not so winning as others and such rain! Up Glen Ogle, along one of the loveliest roads beside one of the loveliest lakes in this land of lakes and roads to glory over—Loch Lubnaig. (If people don't stop trying to camp out this weather they are going to break my heart.) Wound over the wooded Pass of Leny at the foot of Ben Ledi, 'the hill of God,' the River Leny roaring below. We decided in spite of downpour to turn off and see far-famed Trossachs. Too fixed for traffic and tourists ('send our beloved Scotland won't all be like that some day!') and '10 m.p.hr.' signs every few yards to haunt you. For Lady of Lake's sake I walked reservoir road a mile along Loch Katrine. Oogh, not my style. Fenced. Signs about garbage disposal. Wire baskets for rubbish. Empty yellow film cases. I want a theatre packed, standing room only. For mountain lakes and waterfalls and glens prefer to feel I'm only human being to gaze upon them.... We thought to stop cold night in Callander, then Doune, then Dunblane. Each time I got out of car to ask about rooms I like to a' drowned. At last, second place we asked in Bridge of Allan took us in."

... And the Highlands for us were over. The next day I stood on the terrace of Stirling Castle, high on its commanding cliff, and gazed northwards with something of the feeling of the exile already in my heart.

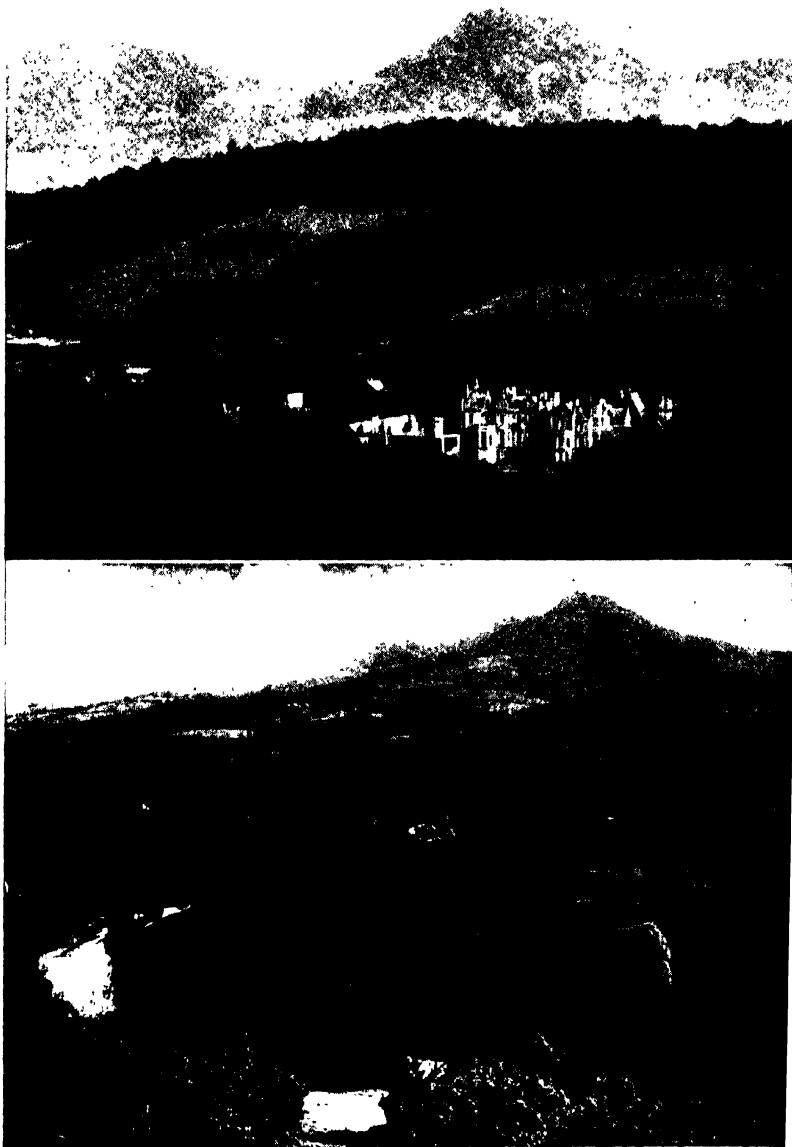
"... From the lone shieling of the misty island

Mountains divide us, and the waste of seas—

Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,

And we in dreams behold the Hebrides...."

ABBOTSFORD



THE COUNTRY NEAR SCOTT'S HOME

Yes, you would think the ocean pounded between us and that years of sighing separated me from my last farewell to the north of Scotland.

“... Blows the wind today, and the sun and the rain are flying,
Blows the wind on the moors today and now,
Where above the graves of the martyrs the waups are crying,
My heart remembers how!”

Four hundred and twenty feet down my tears could have dropped. To be seeing the Highlands again! Yet there the Highlands stood, half-ringed round me—Ben Lomond, Ben Venue, Ben Ledi, Ben Vorlich. . . . Yet what lay beyond!—Back after “the Forty-five” Hessian troops employed in subduing Prince Charlie’s followers refused to cross the Pass of Killiecrankie, sure they had reached the end of civilization. . . . What my heart still longs to see the other side of Killiecrankie!

And here we were in Stirling Castle which had either guarded the Highlands against the Lowlands close to a thousand years, or the Lowlands against the Highlands, depending on who held it and who wanted to hold it. Wallace, and the Battle of Stirling; a hundred and forty men held it long against Edward I in person; Bruce and Bannockburn and the date 1314 which marks the independence of Scotland—

“Scots, wha hae wi’ Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed.
Or to victory.”

... Mary was crowned queen in the church nearby at the age of eight months. . . . James I of England was christened in the Palace of Stirling, Queen Elizabeth of England dispatching a gold font weighing two stones to her “dear cousin” for the occasion. . . . Prince Charlie besieged the castle in 1746 on his way to fateful Culloden. . . .

We watched young Scots recruits drill on the parade grounds before the castle, which is now used for barracks. Can

any country really take pride in the sight of its raw recruits during the early stages of the learning process? But it was a joy to hear the drill sergeant in his plaid breeches tell the youngsters agonizing before him in their plaid breeches just how awful they were, in the broadest Scots talk you ever heard. They all looked like embryo models for Bruce Bairnsfather, and life no happier for them because at least a hundred female persons of varying ages, and some right comely and young, were gazing steadfastly upon them. Would not such a moment be wise for obtaining signatures against military training and in favor of eternal peace? Lassies who might love soldiers would perhaps consider they could make as heroic and seductive a showing in some other walk of life. Even the sergeants left one feeling the last word had not been said in the business of devastating heroism. As for the youths themselves—unless looks totally deceive, surely 100 per cent would have signed anything which would insure their never again seeing the parade ground and those sergeants—at least if they continued to draw an audience.

AND now, to bring the proper climax to Scotland, we were on our way to Edinburgh. "Drove on over dull countryside—just to draw near to industrialism and big cities puts a blight on nature. Must it always be so?" ("How full," wrote Carr, "of accommodation is habit. A gentleman of Newcastle . . . observed that he looked upon smoke as good for all disorders, and particularly effective in repelling the plague.")

We stopped at Linlithgow with its castle, roofless, damp, draughty, not a soul stirring in its moss-grown passages, fit spot to sense a fraction of the tragedies which beset Scotland. Stirling held the glamour of certain proud achievements and heroes who tasted success. Linlithgow—it is as if the very tears of Scotland seeped through those ruined walls. Here James IV, moved by an impulse too chivalrous for the good of his country, bid his own queen farewell to do battle in answer to a plea from the lovely Queen of France. He met England at Flodden

Field, where Scotland "lost a civilization and gained a song"; where Scotland lost her king, her leading nobles, ten thousand of her sons, those Flowers of the Forest a' wede awa. And Queen Margaret "all lonely sat and wept the weary hour" at Linlithgow, waiting for news of her lord. Somehow the tragedy of Flodden Field can be felt more poignantly in Margaret's watch tower in Linlithgow than on the field itself. . . . A child of two was left King of Scotland.

Here in Linlithgow James V came into his ever-troubled Scots world. Thirty-one years later his heart was not to bear the disgrace of Scotland's defeat at Solway Moss, and the news that his wife had borne him a daughter. From first to last Mary was hard on men's hearts, and brought them to their death, all unwittingly. . . . Another queen's tears in Linlithgow, another baby on the throne of unlucky Scotland. In this roofless castle of winds and yawning casements overlooking grey Loch Linlithgow began that life which so loved happiness and found its tragic end at Fotheringay.

The first thing we did in Edinburgh was to buy a life of Mary, Queen of Scots.

"I SHALL always remember Edinburgh as one of the most beautiful cities of this world," begins June's diary. "It has so much character, probably collected through years of experience. The castle where lovely Mary, Queen of Scots, gave birth to James I of England, glorifying that high cliff that glorifies Edinburgh. And Princes Street, the main street of the city with a sunken park forming its entire southern side. Edinburgh is filled with ghosts, all of whom she still remembers, sometimes with sadness and pity, sometimes with pride. What a *lovely* city!

"In the morning we went up to the castle again. . . . I left the castle thinking deeply of Mary Stewart whom I came across in every corner of Scotland. I went again to meet her, this time at Holyrood, her main palace in Scotland. I walked down the

Royal Mile, once the street of Edinburgh, now the slums, with its once beautiful houses falling into decay. The dirty children played about the gutters and in the historic closes which once housed noblemen's horses. I left it all when Holyrood came into view. It is not a beautiful palace.... I went up a stair case to the Gallery."

Here I break in to quote again from Morton, whose description of that gallery June refers to in her diary, and which was to us almost the choice bit of his account of Edinburgh:

"The sentry guards, presumably, the ghost of Mary, Queen of Scots, for there is now nothing else in Holyrood except the worst picture gallery in the world.

"I have encountered few things so fascinatingly bad as these alleged portraits of one hundred and ten Scottish monarchs, 'who,' said Sir Walter Scott, taking the words out of the mouths of later critics, 'if they ever flourished at all, lived several hundred years before the invention of painting in oil colours.'

"These one hundred and ten monarchs were executed—that seems the right word—by a Dutchman living in Edinburgh named James de Witt. . . . No artist since the world began signed such a contract as that drawn upon February 26th, 1684, by Hugh Wallace, His Majesty's Cash-keeper: a most just title! James de Witt bound himself to paint and deliver within two years from the signing of the contract, and for a salary of £120 per annum, 110 portraits 'in large royal postures' of all the kings, mythical and actual, who had reigned over Scotland 'from King Fergus the First to King Charles the Second, our Gracious Sovereigne.' It was also part of the contract that de Witt had to find his own paint and canvas, and inscribe each portrait with the name of the subject—the names of the kings most famous in large characters and the remnant lesser characters'

"So the awful race began. De Witt turned out Scottish monarchs at the rate of one and a fraction a week for two years, and at an all-in price of a little over forty shillings per royal head....

"As I look at the amazing collection of kings, real and apocryphal, I want to know whether there was a Madame de

Witt to console him and support him in his reckless ordeal, to burst in on him at night with:

'Now, James, you *must* go to bed. . . . Who's that supposed to be?'

"De Witt runs his finger down the long list:

'Fergusius the Third—no, sorry, Thebus the First.'

'But my dear, you *must* go to bed. You're overdoing it; you've given him exactly the same face as Eugenius the Seventh. . . .'

'Oh well, I can't help it! I'll give him a squint! Do you think the milkman would come tomorrow and sit for Corbredus the First?'

'But you had him for Caractatus!'

"And once a week for two years, the greatest sight in Edinburgh must have been that of a man in a cloak and a Socialist tie going down Canongate to Holyrood with the weekly monarch under his arm! My heart bleeds for de Witt! How did he hand over the result of his artistic debauchment:

'Here's old Corvallus the Third—damn him!'

'Right you are, laddie; fling him on the pile. How many to come now?'

'Sixty-eight!'

'Are you on time?'

'Yes; I'm winning by two lengths—William the Lion and Macbeth. . . .'

'Good egg. . . .'

"Instinct tells me there is a great story in poor de Witt. He was the Henry Ford in oils of the seventeenth century!"

"I knew what was in store for me," June wrote of the gallery. "... Then to Mary's room and the little wee room where Riccio was murdered by Mary's coward of a husband, Darnley, while the victim was dining with the Queen, then up a winding stair-case to Darnley's apartments. Down stairs again to the ruined chapel where Mary was married to her worthless husband Bothwell. What things that palace had witnessed in its time! The State Chambers, where Queen Mary and King George V sleep when visiting Edinburgh. I wonder if the pres-

ent Mary ever thinks about that former unhappy Mary, when she sleeps in that palace— And what the former Mary wouldn't give to live the life of the present Mary, honored, loved, secure in position, and living in a more peaceful age." (There may be two wonders over that exchange!)

"... We decided upon the bright idea of hiring a horse and carriage and seeing Edinburgh more leisurely. We made a tour of Old Edinburgh, aided by the totally un-understandable Scotch guiding of our coachman. We ended up at the foot of Princes Street, and walked up to our place, passing my most vivid in memory and most loved monument in all Edinburgh, the Scottish-American War Memorial. Of all the times in my life when I would want to be a beautiful writer or poet, it is when I look at the face of the man on the monument. I never wanted to embrace America more than when I saw that it was she who had given that face and expression to Scotland! She should be honored for that." (June needed to add "I never wanted to embrace Scotland more than when I saw that it was she who had given that face and expression to America!"—It was a Scottish-American memorial!)

"... We then dragged our weary limbs back to the hotel. That night I read Mary Stewart, of all her misery and unhappiness in those very castles that I had seen that day. Poor, lovely Mary."

I HAVE no idea what Edinburgh would be like to live in, with a sense of permanency. I know it had its days of glory when for those few who ever spell the culture of a city, life must have been stimulating, the days rich. When the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, or at any rate the man she firmly believed her son, became King of England, the pomp and excitement of Scottish royalty no longer lent its splash to Edinburgh's color; after the union of 1707 the further exodus of men of affairs to London took place, and that many fewer shades to a capital. Yet Boswell could collect men he felt deserving to meet his Johnson. There was a gay swirl to the city when

Scotland's greatest writer was considered the fitting person to welcome the first Hanoverian king to visit the country Scott made more famous by his pen than could ever monarch by a sceptre. More and more of Edinburgh's aristocracy of brains, of business, of politics, of family found its way to London with the years: of how much and what quality was left, I know nothing. Whoever remained from choice or necessity lived in one of the beautiful cities of this world. His, Old Edinburgh on its high lands, the castle on its towering rock, the Royal Mile sloping down over High Street and Canongate to Holyrood, and all the myriad intricate associations of a city eight hundred years in the making; his, below on the plain, New Edinburgh, Princes Street its Business Mile; shops, theatres, museums, hospitals, university, residences of dignity and, by then, sanitation. In between, the park which was once Nor' Loch at the base of Castle Rock and now is lawn and flowers and statues, the "other side" of Princes Street.

I know that today there is the Scottish Nationalist Party, which feels more is lost through union with England than is of vital Scottish gain; they have indeed the makings of a cause. More important than the party is what lies behind it, "the ferment of interest in Scottish affairs and culture at present taking place. Circumstances were probably never so propitious for some sort of dramatic revival. . . ."

What unending days would be needed to know Edinburgh. Yet one is richer for but a few superficial hours in her castle, her marvelous War Memorial within the castle walls, to many the finest in the world, John Knox's house. . . . The monumental doings of his tall gaunt bearded figure, and Mary's unwise years, seem to fill the very cracks and crannies of the old city like a Scots mist. . . .

Of all the ghosts of the old city the most vivid to me, because so peculiarly Edinburgh's own, are the caddies. What romance, what adventure, what all-wisdom lurked about those small ill-clad figures hovering around door steps along the Royal Mile, waiting for orders at the base of that cross which

was the center of Edinburgh's street life. Theirs every scrap of gossip floating about the city; every personage of any importance was known to their quick-eyed, quick-eared membership better, half times, than to himself. The caddy of Edinburgh was its messenger by word of mouth for those who could not write, by letter for the literate. (When Edinburgh boasted 70,000 population she possessed one postman and six carriers.) He acted as guide, almost as necessary to the native in that city of dark and tortuous "wynds" as to the visitor. Had you a parcel, value £200, to be delivered, you could trust it to a rag-a-muffin caddy. What their morals were outside of hours it was no one's purpose to enquire. As caddies their organization made good to the last penny any loss or theft due to dishonesty or carelessness. Indeed their activities ramified beyond the immediate commission; in 1774 it could be said that "it is entirely owing to them that there are fewer robberies and less housebreaking in Edinburgh than anywhere else."

Probably, since practically every able-bodied citizen of Edinburgh must have played golf, in that land where it has been the national game from king to shoemaker for five hundred years—once indeed a king-to-be and shoemaker played together in that sport of utmost democracy in Scotland and of so much implied aristocracy everywhere else—probably when Edinburgh caddies got wind of a game afoot, and a chance to pick up a few pennies carrying clubs, some of them were off to nose out a bit of business on the links. . . .

John Knox, Mary, Queen of Scots, caddies . . . personalities enough for one city. If you include Ramsay, Scott and Stevenson—but the last two I never picture about Edinburgh. Yet because of the pull of my academic past, and the love I bore Professor Miller who made "The Wealth of Nations" an adventure, I cannot leave Edinburgh without my head bowed a moment as we pass the grave of Adam Smith.

ROSLIN CHAPEL south of Edinburgh is surely the most un-Scots-looking thing in Scotland, making a Benedictine Abbey



FOUNTAINS ABBEY



ALNWICK CASTLE

in Fort Augustus seem indigenous. It is lace and frills in stone, nor surely did ever the pibroch echo within its sculptured profusion. It is beautiful as lace is beautiful, and in certain moods it may be lace and God go together. I had rather seen the little twelfth century Romanesque church of Dalmeny.

But Roslin Castle on its cliffs is good Scots, three stories of it cut into the living rock. In one of those rock-hewn rooms reserved for prisoners they must needs sweep out the dripping water continually, so it was planned, else it rose its four inches in quick time—and the floor was their bed, their table, their chair. Yet a lord of “the lordly line of high St. Clair” could say his prayers in the lacey glory of Roslin Chapel the while.

Those were our last Scots valleys we were driving along—to Galashiels, to Abbotsford. Abbotsford. How hallowed that spot becomes once you have taken Scotland of the past to your heart! One little corner of the world—and it possessed Scott and Burns, so much bone of its bone, blood of its blood, one can imagine them breathing no other air. When we started our Scots journey I had forgotten all the Scott I had ever read, though I had been an honest enthusiast from ten to thirteen. June loved “Ivanhoe,” all the others she attempted bored her past bearing. By the time we reached Abbotsford, Scott was for both of us more than an author. He was, what indeed he is and ever shall be, a national hero. Finished with Abbotsford, you vow you will read and reread every word the man ever wrote—or at least one tenth of them, which would use up a good part of any human’s reading existence. I never shall get around to reading any of him again—and there’s another broken vow added to the Himalayas of them piled high in every corner of this globe. But I am reading the story of his amazingly productive and constructive life, which is at once an inspiration and a bitter discouragement for but a poor human wielder of the pen.

Abbotsford was the home of his own mediæval dreams worked true; there, as much as man could make possible, was the background of the Scotland he brought to life for a world

not giving Scotland before his day a thought. At the present it is almost exactly as he left it when "about half past one P.M. on the 21st of September (1832) Sir Walter breathed his last, in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ears, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt beside his bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes. . . . No sculptor ever modeled a more majestic image of repose. . . ."

Two last experiences brought our Scotland to its fitting close. We visited Melrose, to be sure, but it became immediately dimmed in the far greater rapture over Dryburgh Abbey, a sight almost too lovely for this world. Never did monks choose such a setting—the long fifteen hundred years ago it was chosen—tucked away from the world on a loop of the Tweed. Aged trees hover over its century-old, now-ruined arches, tree adding beauty to arch, arch to tree. Only Dryburgh ever made me yearn for the cloistered life—at least if I were past middle age and weary. There it seemed I could have tarried years on end and never a dulling of its charm. Little remains of abbey, church, garth . . . yet enough for grateful mortals, enough! The trees are there, the loop of river, the peace, the stillness. . . . Scott rests in the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, a deserving spot to hold what was his living greatness.

The last memory of Scotland is the late afternoon drive from Kelso to the border, most of the way a striking rainbow, then rainbows, plural and dramatic, ached ahead of us. The lovely Tweed flowed along beside the road . . . past the very last memory of all, Flodden Field.

"Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!"

Was it mere coincidence that at the very moment we crossed the border, "leaving," as June's diary mournfully has it, "that one beloved Scotland behind us," the most heart-rending sounds arose from our left rear wheel? "I cannot bear it!" groaned the wheel. Dejected, forlorn, we limped on down the English miles to the first shelter to stand beside our tortured way, a good old English "pub." "Then onto a night of dreams, with that dear country called Scotland monopolizing all other dreams that crept up."

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CHAPTER 20

WITH THE PERCYS AT ALNWICK CASTLE; WITH WILLIAM HUTTON ALONG THE ROMAN WALL. OVER NORMAN DURHAM TO FOUNTAINS, LOVELIEST OF ENGLISH ABBEYS. WE ARE NOT SLAUGHTERED BETWEEN HARROGATE AND YORK, ALTHOUGH CLEAN ENOUGH FOR TRAGEDY. MENED IN YORK, CITY OF CITIES



IDO YOU know how many places I wish to write about between the Border and London? Forty-one. Do you know how many there is space for? None. A book of one's travels must always be a choice—shall one tell more of fewer places or less of more? Too, there is the feeling that many have told, will be telling, of Durham, York, Lincoln, Cambridge, Oxford . . . whereas, is it not a bit of my duty, as well as my pen's desire, to let you know something of the Dukeries, of Tattershall, of the Peddars Way, of Walsingham, of Ewelme of . . . of the Broads? But selfishly, for my very own pleasure, there is scarcely a sight, an experience, I would leave out from Milfield over the Border to the last Sunday afternoon at Eton.

Even the left rear wheel gave June a chance for an hour's bicycle ride about Wooler, while a kindly garage man slaved at all angles for an hour and charged a shilling. Certainly I could never feel England, Scotland and Wales tinkered with that wheel for pecuniary purposes! Put in order we made for Aln-

wick, called Annick, because of its castle in the possession of the Duke of Northumberland, "one of the most imposing examples in England of mediæval fortifications." The air around it was thick with the eventful deeds of Percys and our special hero Hotspur, which you begin to breathe as you glimpse the barbi-can and fourteenth century entrance tower and gateway. In years gone by Percys were as kings in the north of England; today the Duke of Northumberland is one of the greatest nobles in the realm by virtue of his family, his holdings; and today he still, as for more than eight hundred years, lives in Alnwick Castle.

It was because the family were expected within a few days, and preparations being made accordingly, that we could see only the outside of the castle, although all the outside within the walls. A perfect and aging servant dressed in livery with a creased Scots cap and much expanse of starched white shirt front, showed us about, and delightfully. For once I outraged my upbringing and asked questions about the family he served which were more curious than well bred. Yet here was a man who was competent and seemed more than willing to tell us details we longed to know about how a family with the background and position of the Percys, the Duke of Northumberland a great peer of the realm, lived in such a castle from day to day. How, I was most eager to know, did they raise their children! How was the household managed; how many servants did it take; what sort of entertaining went on within the castle; what was their idea of play, of recreation? In other words, all I desired learning was how the Duke spent his days, the Duchess hers, the children theirs, and the servants theirs. The first questions I stumbled over, expecting to be smote for prying into matters none of my business; then I grew bold. We left Alnwick Castle with a picture in our minds of one great English family as it lives its ordinary days, of their four boys and two girls, of the young Earl Percy at Eton, going to Oxford "of course," studious, feeling the responsibility of his position over-conscientiously; of the more or less

constant entertaining, especially in the hunting season, the Duke being a great hunter and all the children started off as soon as they could sit a horse; of the forty-two servants, reduced in these late difficult years from over eighty; of the daily prayers at nine in the chapel, attended by family and servants. . . . Of a gentle greying servant answering questions on a terrace overlooking the park and the river Alne, once the defense of Alnwick against the Scots, feeding his specially-named sparrows crumbs of cake . . . "they won't eat bread!" We later inspected the wondrous coach of state in which the Duke of Northumberland rides to coronations. . . . Since our Alnwick visit the then Duke of Northumberland has died, the young and studious Earl Percy is Duke, still in his 'teens, and no American can envy him the thousand years of responsibility, if one allows for the name of Percy, he carries on his young shoulders. My two sons would be at a loss to tell one point about any great grandfather.

Over wild Northumbrian moors to Bellingham and tea and the first radio we had heard all summer; music it was one could travel hard miles to listen to, music and music of the kind to rejoice the very inner soul, and not one syllable uttered the hour we listened to jar upon the grateful ears. Never has a radio seemed to me so valuable a possession as on that Northumberland afternoon of no advertising, of no spoken word. I would own a radio in England. The wheel began to work loose. Nothing in our lives! On over more wild moors to, at last, in bitter cold and wind and clouds, the Roman Wall.

Now, of course, never in my original scheme of things, which was to do England as near as possible chronologically, should the Roman Wall have been sandwiched in between Alnwick Castle of the Percys, and Durham Cathedral. Perhaps I plotted to follow Stonehenge with early British hut circles on Dartmoor, then Rome's influence—Bignor . . . Bath . . . Hadrian's Wall . . . and then of course Tintagel and King Arthur. The idea of chronological travel is handsome, but history pays too little attention to mileage. So here we were,

Hadrian holding hands with Hotspur, and the Highlands still close to our hearts. If Life is a jumble anyhow, that still allows some order to history, yet we paid no attention to order in our scrambled Austin summer. The idea was that we could unscramble later.

But for the moment all that counted was Hadrian's Wall and Rome. For that matter, looking back from 1930, all that Hadrian's Wall and Rome ever counted, in England, was for the moment. We grow so used on the Continent to sensing Rome's unbroken, though for long periods highly-damaged, influence, it needs an effort of the mind to realize the rôle the Empire played in Britain. Rome came, Rome saw, Rome in time conquered, and life settled down to four hundred years of some degree of Roman influence, if not actual rule. Yet perhaps the greatest student of Roman-Britain could write "From the Romans who once ruled Britain we Britons have inherited practically nothing." Everything to do with the Roman life, cities, villas, arts, language, and its proud political organization so tenacious in one form or another across the Channel "vanished like a dream." Everything? Yet the very question mark means that to spend a summer journeying through England is to be reminded on all sides that Rome once held sway. Stones and bricks remain, in towers, in arches, in many a wall; ruined cities lie more or less recently exposed to England's most un-Italian skies, ploughs in their apparently prosaic upturnings have exposed mosaic floorings in weather-swept fields. And how many times in the course of a summer's motoring does one look up from a Michelin map and announce "We're on a Roman Road"?

The Roman Wall extends across England from the Tyne to the Solway, a distance of seventy-four miles, in its second century heyday twenty feet high and eight feet thick, with fortlets or "milecastles" and sentry boxes at regular intervals, a ditch in front, forts behind, a military road running its length.

Kipling brings the Wall very much to life in "Puck of

Pook's Hill," albeit authorities feel the picture inaccurate in that there was no such distinction between Roman and Briton as Kipling draws. In reality the Britain he describes had become Romanized with no resultant racial cleavage whatever. For all that, it is very much a story to read.

And Britain as the Wall's rôle was ended, described by a lesser than Kipling? Writes a good old chronicler of 1706: "The Picts and Scots . . . grew more bold than ever. . . . There stood upon the Top of the Fortifications a Slothful Army, which watching Night and Day with Trembling Hearts, grew Faint and Stupid. . . . To be short, the Britains fly and leave not only their Wall, but their cities, and are everywhere scattered. They thus express their Calamities: The Barbarians drive us to the Sea, the Sea drives us back again upon the Barbarians. We can only choose One of these Two Sorts of Death, whether we will have our throats cut or be drowned." Which fairly well expresses what happened to Roman civilization in Britain.

Not so very long ago, before man became historically-minded, hardly anyone outside of antiquarians knew the remains of such a Wall existed, nor would have cared had he known. Then came good William Hutton, born 1723, founder of the first circulating library, who set out to see "the greatest of all the curiosities left us by the Romans." His account did not consider details of his own costume unworthy of note; dressed in black, carrying over his shoulder a wallet "of the same material," filled mainly with maps, and to which was strapped a large green—wise English soul—umbrella. From Birmingham on foot over hills and moors and pass, to Carlisle, from where he picked up the western limit of the Wall at Bowness-on-Solway and followed it to the mouth of the Tyne, then retraced his steps back to Bowness, which is being thorough, as humans go. He was, to my California notions, especially blessed by the gods, "having crossed the kingdom twice, under a burning sun and without a drop of rain, in seven days and six hours. . . ." Nor did the worthy Englishman omit further noteworthy details, recording that he arrived back in

Birmingham "after a loss by perspiration, of one stone of animal weight, an expenditure of forty guineas, a lapse of thirty-five days, and a walk of six hundred and one miles." And he was seventy-eight! I cannot decide whether to omit or give the detail that he wore for six hundred and one miles one pair of stockings. But when in pride he added, "Perhaps I am the first man that ever traveled the whole length of this Wall, and probably the last that will ever attempt it," he reckoned without posterity. Indeed in its day Roman Britain may have produced a man now and then who walked the entire Wall, though not in the spirit of Mr. Hutton of Birmingham.

As for Parkers, the less said about our handling of the Roman Wall the better. There are places still where by exploring some way from the road a great sweep of the Wall can be gained; one can walk along its top for miles. That is what we had once planned to do, in modest and unwitting imitation of Mr. Hutton. Ach, vacation should last nine months, school three. So little time before London, so much yet to see and do! We scuttled back and forth in the small maroon car and caught mild glimpses where we had thought to gaze enthralled upon the most northern outpost of Rome's might. It was so cold! It was growing dark with black clouds, with the hour. And we chose the bleak hills about the Wall for a short cut. Roman legions never were so lost. One guide post we finally came upon on a windswept barren cross road, but whatever names it once possessed had long since weathered away. We turned left and that world became too foreboding. We came back and turned down a hill. God spared our lives, to some purpose or to none. I do not believe there can be another such hill with a so-called road on it in the British Isles. If you did not burst out laughing you would be petrified at the angle of it, the rocks, the ruts, the turns, its utter desertion in a darkening waste-land. So we laughed, and landed at the bottom somehow whole. Came the search for a place where we would—where we could—spend the night, the longest search, the most fruitless search of the summer. If any inn were a quarter possible-looking in any

town it was "full." Why full? Who fills these odd off-the-map places? It grew darker, and hamlets, villages and towns became merely more or less lights. "Sorry, we haven't got a room!" At last, at last Ebchester and a wee Temperance Hotel possessing all told and at most exactly one room to let, and since that one was ours, it was better than a hundred filled by others. A low, peaceful room, one of our favorites of the whole summer, with a big feather bed to sink away in. No garage for the Austin which had brought us safely so very far in one long day, and up so many steep hills, and down so many others. We left it in a corner of an honest world. Bed and breakfast, one dollar each, which was the cheapest we found all the summer.

To THE lover of Norman arches, Durham is the cathedral of England; to those who would travel far for the sight of a cathedral perfectly placed, topping the wooded cliffs above the river Wear, Durham is the Cathedral of England; to those who enjoy much mediæval color in the legends of a cathedral's founding, the stories of the age-long travels of the body of St. Cuthbert in its seventh century coffin before it found its final resting place in the eleventh century Norman cathedral, mean a rich living background to a building of stone. In addition, the twelfth century sanctuary knocker on the great north door lends romance to religion. A picture flashes easily to the mind of a fugitive dashing for his life, in forfeit to the State had he killed a comrade or stolen a cow, finding breathless sanctuary once the churchyard was reached. His hand on the great knocker as he opened the door into the church itself must have spelled added relief. He may have been ordered to leave England immediately, white cross in hand to show he was fleeing for his life, yet under the protection of the church. At least he was alive.

I was impressed over again with what children do or do not get out of travel by the story our guide told us in Durham Cathedral. In the Chapel of the Nine Altars are shafts of

polished Weardale marble filled with tiny fossilized figures. Thirty years ago a small boy once grew restless as he was being—shall one say—“dragged” about the cathedral, where—upon our guide, guiding all those thirty years, pointed out for his amusement how certain odd patterns could be imagined in the small fossilized bits on the polished green surface of the marble. Not long ago that boy came back, almost forty years old. He wanted to see Durham Cathedral again, because the only thing he could remember in the whole massive Norman construction was a tiny yellowish-green fossil which looked something like the face of an old man.

Norman cathedral, Norman castle of prince-bishops, and crowded Saturday streets of Durham left behind, we wound our enchanted way over miles of varied and glorious country, past Raby Castle with a Saturday afternoon cricket match going on and we longing to see more of that most fascinating, lived-in “magnificent seat of the Nevilles and later of the Vanes.” All I could do was to climb a wall and take a picture. Some day we are going back to stay at Staindrop nearby, and from there explore Teesdale, and all sorts of sights round about.

There came miles of high barren moors, then a drive to treasure from Kirkby Stephen to Moor Cock Inn up the valley of the Eden—stream, castle ruins, bleak hills to the left, sun every place, and the world to ourselves. After Moor Cock Inn we turned down the softer yet more lovely green valley of the Ure, with that urge to stop at each turn of the road in such soft late afternoon loveliness, yet a still stronger urge to keep going, going, lest we miss one view of the perfect early evening. Wensley seemed to us both one of the most charming corners in all England, but we could, alas, locate no inn. Many attractive inns we did pass, all full that Saturday of wise folk in walking togs. I hate to think of how it poured on them all the next day! Indeed, had we not a most perfect bicycle trip planned for the next day ourselves? From Masham, where we spent the night, back to Jervaulx Abbey all that region of the

Ure should be bicycled. I have not, however, changed my mind about bicycling in a downpour.

Yet there was an eerie gold light to Sunday's rain. We were really very fed up with rains, yet both our diaries record something of real affection for the rain of August tenth. "There was a soft summery light over the world—my heart was happy enough to split. We took the most fascinating byroads to Ripon and loved that town so that we could hardly bear to leave it, but the cathedral made no impression. Could live long without that! Then . . . *Then* . . . THEN came Fountains Abbey. *How* we loved that!! It poured, which helped to keep the place almost to ourselves. Prowled every place, my heart full to bursting. A wee bird perched on a lovely slender ruined pillar did make it burst a little. Oh that Abbey of Abbeys!"

When I asked June the Christmas vacation after our British summer where she would like to travel next summer, what land she most longed to see, she said at once "I'd rather go back to England again!" Which is what England does to you, no matter what your age. When I think of Fountains Abbey it would seem as if that must be re-visited before anything else is looked upon in any other land, just as there is certain music one would rather hear over and over, given the chance, sure of what it means to one's heart.

"For absolute beauty of sight and architecture and for pure pictorial quality combined, this abbey stands easily first of all in Great Britain," writes Ralph Adams Cram in his "Ruined Abbeys of Great Britain." It always is a bit difficult to remember, as one looks upon the glory still remaining to ruined abbeys, that most if not all of them were founded in revolt against the ease and comfort enjoyed by some religious order in its over-worldly quarters. It needs history to tell us that Fountains Abbey was founded by twelve pious brothers in possession of nothing but the scant garments on their backs, searching for hardship and austerity, their souls' needs. There in its soundless turfed valley of the Skill, framed by green forests, stands the "silvery vision, silent and alone"—what is

left, after eight hundred years, of the nave and transepts of the church, the nave still all but perfect; the cloistral buildings, whether now a fragment of an arch rising from the green turf or the eighteen-pillared intact vault of the great Dormitory of the Lay Brothers; the Chapel of the Nine Altars. "It is a wonderful thing, this Nine Altars," writes the architect Cram again, "and one of the loveliest in England." And last addition to the glory of that Cistercian dream in its narrow wooded valley—Abbot Huby's tower. That rainy Sunday of its golden glow to tree and stone, and Fountains Abbey almost to our very selves alone—how thoughts winged their way from arch and trees to sky!

Can the ruined abbeys of this England be forever mere broken arches against the trees and sky? If one completes the arch in imagination one comes in time to the living reason of it all. And if once more cowed monks tread the stones, are we to see them ardent, inspired souls renouncing the world in order to serve God with all their lives, simple, poor, austere, laborious? Or are we to pass the easy judgment of later days, that here dwelt corruption, wealth, worldliness, ease? Perhaps according to one's tastes, for both were in their day correct. It may be the very beauty of a ruined abbey which makes it more in keeping with one's mood to let the good prevail. Perhaps it is the mounting detestation of the means taken by a king in so many ways unscrupulous which influences one to feel no men could have been guilty of conduct justifying such destruction as spread over the religious houses of England.

But for the three abbeys I love the most, Fountains, Netley, Dryburgh, I reserve the right to picture them in the days of their good deeds.

God in his Heaven only knows the debt we owe Cistercian monks. It is one of those gestures made by a providence at times generous beyond all call that men, whose recording acts of daily living meant so much to future ages, built in lasting stone to such perfection. Service and beauty do not always walk hand in hand—certainly not in our immediate day. In one

respect every age follows its inevitable way of doom—the possessionless among us may take from the history of all time such comfort as we will. Let men's hearts be early steeped in godliness, in time too much worldly success dims every heaven. If too much over too long a period, eyes are no longer lifted from possessions of the earth to where the vision of the spirit once shone clear. . . .

BENEDICT in the sixth century founded his monastery in worship, poverty, study, humility, service, and an understanding and allowance for certain weaknesses of man's body and soul. Six hundred years later Stephen Harding of Dorsetshire could feel only despair for the luxury, idleness, profligacy he found in the Benedictine Monastery he sought across the Channel. History repeated itself. A band of zealous, godly, persevering monks sought the wilderness. Back to Benedict himself they turned, as some few crazy souls about the world now and then suggest that for Christian living we turn back to Christ. No less would Benedictines hear of turning back to the clear simple faith and deeds of their founder. The struggling band of monks established their own new order, the Cistercian, more austere than Benedict himself, rigorous simplicity its cornerstone in all things, plus manual labor—that belief which will persist through the ages that unless we create with our own hands there is no salvation. One rule of the order ran: "None of our Houses is to be built in cities, in castles, or villages; but in places remote from the conversation of men. . . ."

Rigorous simplicity could with the years accept Fountains Abbey, glory of architecture. Manual labor came to mean that at one time the Cistercians controlled the wool export trade of England. Money flowed into their coffers from farming, from trade, from—most radical and reprehensible negation of early principles—gifts and bequests. Wealth. . . . Henry VIII. . . . Cloven arches against green leaves. . . .

If Fountains Abbey had remained its struggling wattle building beneath century old yews, if Cistercian monks had

continued sharing their own precarious loaf with him who knocked from the outside world, hungry. . . . History bothers with no ifs. Under Cistercian cowls were human beings.

Is there a soul among us today to whom the idea of a monastery in "a place remote from the conversation of men" makes no appeal? It is as much a part of our humanity as herding in stifling moving-picture palaces. A life which holds an ardent acceptance of some religion; work with the hands which shows results; a certain simplicity in food, clothing, possessions—rather let us say, according to St. Benedict's notions than St. Bernard's; books more than could be found in the outside world, study, music, certain regular calls to service in behalf of others, and certain quiet hours in every day in which to THINK. . . . And all of it beside a river winding down a tree-decked valley—and fish in the river. . . . No wonder Lecky, who had little use for monasteries, still had to write "The fretfulness and impatience and extreme tension of modern literary life, the many anxieties that paralyze, and the feverish craving for applause that perverts so many noble intellects, were then unknown. Severed from all the cares of active life, in the deep calm of the monastery, where turmoil of the outer world could never come, the monkish scholar pursued his studies in a spirit which has now almost faded from the world. No doubt ever disturbed his mind. To him the problem of the universe seemed solved. Expiating forever with unfaltering faith upon the unseen world, he had learned to live for it alone."

To have been a mediæval monk at Fountains in the height of its glory and service part of the year, to be a gypsy for another part, to own a small Tudor manor house with tennis courts and a swimming pool . . . and most of the time to be a twentieth century American woman with three children—now there is a life!

But of course I have not dwelt much on how a Cistercian monk was supposed to arise at two in the morning and glide quietly along the cold passage to matins in the church, and from two to four chant anthems, prayers, psalms. With the

first dawn of day, following a brief period which the monks could spend as they would, came further church service, and, when the sun was really above the horizon, another service. With the day came the meeting in the chapter house when the abbot heard confession of each lapse before all. (There is an appeal in the idea of getting all such matters off the mind each morning early.) Then came work in the fields, with prayers, Cistercian lay brethren helping in manual labor, until the mid-day service. At noon, and not before, came the first repast of the day. (Up since two, since two!) Sacred text was read during the meals. An hour of rest, an afternoon of field work, vespers, second and last meal . . . and then that twilight hour poets sigh over, when a monk could commune with his soul, as he would, granted he would what he should. (Did the abbot let them off this perfect time for fishing?)

“Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall,
More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gain withal
A brighter crown.—On yon Cistercian wall
That confident assurance may be read,
And, to like shelter, from the world have fled
increasing multitude. . . .”

Wordsworth adds

“. . . the potent call
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart’s desires.”

But what call does not?

FROM the sublime to the—ailing. Dear, dear, a car does go too fast. Fountains Abbey to Harrogate in one day; the system should take several for that readjustment. “The doctor says I have acute rheumatism—but *acute!*” The silk handkerchiefed young man is proudly informing the landlady as we ask for rooms. Cheated out of a smelly bath at Bath, we were deter-

mined nothing should rob us of our due in Harrogate, even if it meant waiting around in the rain until Monday. Waiting around consisted in exploring about seventy-five miles in all directions. First to Blubberhouses because we liked the name, and we liked the wet road over deserted Blubberhouses Moor after passing quickly through Blubberhouses. There was not a road we could take that Sabbath which we did not take, and none led to the quaint village and quaint inn we were looking for. One turned up the most alarming hill we ascended all summer, "a hill," according to June, "God would have winced at," our breath not functioning for the seemingly unending, rocky, bumpy, winding, utterly deserted and impossible angle, until we found ourselves high on what appeared a burnt-over waste, miles from man or building.

June had one special urge lasting the entire summer—to get out of the car and rebuild every fallen-to-pieces, deserted hut we ever passed and inhabit it, curtains in the window, kettle on the hearth. Up over the crest of that bleak black plateau if we did not discover a forlorn dilapidated hovel, "in the perfect state of decay," she has it. At last the time and the chance coincided to begin rebuilding. Here was *the* spot June would settle in, a handful of grey boulders for a garden, a black waste to gloat over, and a bath in Harrogate to think about. "Oh, Mom, what I couldn't do with this place!" But just as we had practically taken possession, forth from a leaky out-house marched a rooster followed by four hens. No domesticated animals could possibly inhabit that barren world without the hand of man to feed them. Behind the one door which failed to give to our easy pressure some scatterer of grain must dwell. Crushed, thwarted, we wandered back to the car. It was our nearest moment to acquiring real estate in England.

My grandmother Lee cautioned me in my extreme youth to start off on a journey arrayed from the skin out in such fashion that a more or less serious accident, implying helpless-

ness and being disrobed by others, would cause no embarrassment. Every button should be neatly on, embroidery not only spotless and starched, but attached along its entire line. Indeed, of course, perfect preparedness for the worst implied a more than ordinarily thorough bath.

The next day we were innocently taking our happy way from Harrogate to York, and gingerly crossing a main road, praise heaven in second, when from out of the Everywhere a large limousine crashed into the Here of our little minding-its-own-business Austin. One inch more this way or that. . . . You know the feeling—not of despair and dismay at the sight of a scratchless car suddenly stove in, but of wondering how in the world you were alive at all. The limousine, of course, was practically unscathed, whereas we not only looked like the deluge, but could not budge ourselves out of the middle of the road. An Austin Seven is a handy car—after a wreck, you just carry it to the side of the road, you being a kindly green-grocer from his truck, a Singer Sewing Machine agent who should have a statue built to him for all his kindness, the violinist driver of the limousine, and ourselves. When at last we were left alone in what was still our Austin, formalities settled, the green-grocer on his rounds, the violinist to ruminate on the state of his insurance, the Singer Sewing Machine salesman after help, then it was, June knitting and I about to read Morton aloud, that I began to snicker. Would you not have thought that awe-inspiring, complex, costly, perfect bath of the morning in Harrogate had been merely Grandma Lee's influence lasting these decades? Never such a bath—and my first accident. Yet because of that inch, there we were sitting clean and pretty, not a scratch on us, and those never-to-be-forgotten hosings and soapings and massagings and showerings merely an end in themselves. (June's diary gives three and a half large ecstatic pages to her Harrogate bath, two-thirds of a page to the accident.) The rescue truck arrived from York ten miles away, the Austin was craned up behind, we perched on high with the driver, and off we drove.

Of course, nothing could have been smarter than being smashed near York. Of all the cities in England where a forced stay would be a gift from the gods, York was the place to choose. And bless me, in three days that Austin looked as if it had just come out of the factory. Nor did any of it cost Parkers a cent. And how unforgetably kind the whole world was, from the green-grocer to each soul who stopped along the cross roads ten miles from York to ask if he or she could be of service, to the Forsellius Garage and their care and consideration, to Young's Hotel across from the cathedral. We deserved no special consideration, being so whole.

YORK and Winchester and Cambridge are our most-loved English cities, June leaning to Winchester and Cambridge, I to York and Cambridge. How much of my ardent reaction to cathedral, to crooked narrow streets, to Guild Hall, to Merchant Adventurer's Hall, to ancient church after ancient church, to St. Williams College, to Abbey ruins, to river, to bridges, to walls, to towers—how much of my deep love for and appreciation of it all was due in part to a quite overwhelming gratitude for being alive, who can tell? It seems to me coldly considered—as if one could consider York coldly!—the city would still be my most loved.

As for the cathedral—what if experts find it lacks this and that, is too much something else? It is one of the grandest, most inspiring cathedrals of my world, to be treasured for its stained glass alone,—nay if for nothing but its "Five Sisters" windows. And it possesses so much more than stained glass! Says one writer: "York Cathedral is a great favorite with the man on the street." I then am he.

"Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not.
And why? It is not lessened, but the mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal."

Yet it overwhelmed me each time I entered it. After numerous prowlings alone I indulged in a guide, since there was so much to know about. If cathedral guides are half as invaluable, as charming, as witty, as wise, I must be less scornful of cathedral guides. Nor without a guide could I have beheld the Chapter House, a jewelled glory in the late afternoon sun. It is another Ste. Chapelle in its way, stone as an excuse to hold myriad-colored glass in place. At York I learned to appreciate what keeping stained glass windows in repair means. One window in the Chapter House had not as yet been cleaned, merely dull almost colorless light coming through it. In every other window each tiny piece of glass had been taken out, polished, replaced in a new leaded casing. For years the great "Five Sisters" windows, dull and dark, had let in the murky north light. The women of England, as a memorial to the women of the Great War, collected the money to clean and repair the "Five Sisters" windows, which had meant two years of constant work over two hundred thousand bits of its marvelous thirteenth century grisaille glass. Now the full effect of their soft greenish light meets the enraptured beholder at the south portal.

There is a small church in York which a post-card woman in the alley leading to the south portal of the Cathedral told me about. You have no idea the mine of information people who sell post-cards often can be; the friendly eager woman in York was the most valuable of the summer. It took me long to find the tucked-away All Saints Church across the Ouse. Again such glass and ancient carvings, especially a small wooden statue of a saint, one of the most appealing bits I have ever seen. There was also a bronze Virgin to delight the soul. Every foot of the little ancient Catholic church had some treasure to gasp over, yet the whole was cluttered with modern atrocities. At the base of each priceless colored glass window was a vile framed colored chromo. Paper flowers abounded, as did new painted statuettes of saints and virgins for sale at any corner shop. But



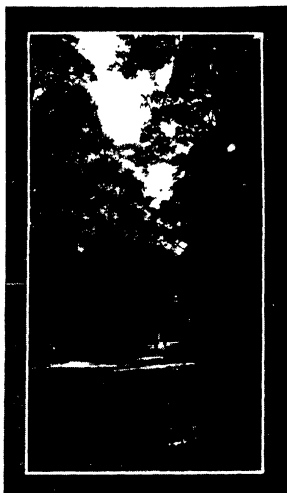
NORMANTON INN, SHERWOOD FOREST



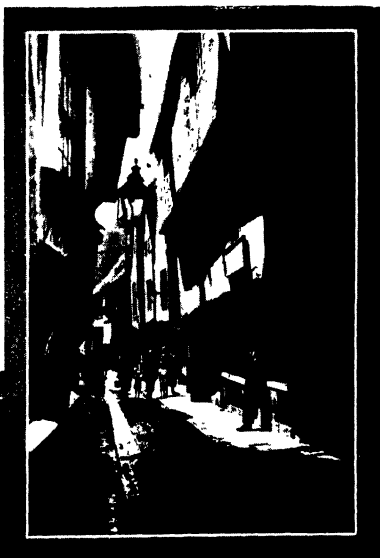
YORK CATHEDRAL



SHERWOOD FOREST



CLUMBER PARK,
THE DUKERIES



YORK

the eyes can find more than enough for thanksgiving, and the church is yours, unshared.

Nor should any traveler miss St. Williams College, to June and me one of the sights of our summer, with its Jacobean quadrangle, its panelled and carved interior with great fireplaces, its mullioned windows, once a home for the Mass priests of the cathedral. But, of course, the important thing to do in York is toward evening to walk the walls, three miles in circuit, with their forbidding stately gates. Walls and gates are more or less exactly as in the city's mediæval need of fourteenth century fortifications against a hostile world; indeed one angle follows the line of the Roman Wall. The city thus circled, its Minster towers ever rising to sunset colored skies, the other evenings should be given to prowling the cathedral close, the narrow streets, where lie dusk and romance.

The second radio we heard in England was in York, and again new possibilities dawned upon the mind. Men were digging a sewer in a narrow lane, to the tune of Beethoven from a radio in a nearby wooden box.

It is a fascinating drive from York over Oswaldkirk and Helmsley—we yearned to stay at the Black Swan Hotel on the generous square—to Rievaulx Abbey. There, as at Bolton Abbey near Harrogate, we paid the penalty for having seen Fountains. All abbey ruins have charm, but somehow after Fountains any other must be an anti-climax.

CHAPTER 21

FIVE WEEKS OF RAIN OVER, WE TAKE TO BICYCLES TO FOLLOW
ROBIN HOOD ABOUT SHERWOOD FOREST AND THE DUKERIES.
THE BURROWING DUKE



WHEN I look back upon the summer it is always with a feeling of amazement that two of our most delightful experiences, which absolutely needed the sun to be successful, I planned in a wee old inn in a hamlet no one ever heard of, where we were literally rain-bound for two days. Yet we were blessed with sun and nothing but sun for the Dukeries and the Broads! Had we not felt compelled to stop on in North Duffield because of the torrents, had I not been able to spend leisurely hours over maps and guide books, I should never have planned the Dukeries and the Broads.

It was as if after five weeks of rain, exactly one fully dry day in all that time, plus those North Duffield torrents, there really was no more water to come down. I worked out in detail a bicycling trip and a boating trip with the rain swishing and beating against window panes, the wind howling about a seventeenth century inn—and the next day the sun came out, and stayed out. We had a short summer storm once in a great while from then on, the kind that is over almost as soon as begun. But rain as rain, rain ruining crops, washing out roads, leaking to luggage—that sort of life was a closed book.

ON to Selby with its fine Abbey Church and its connection with George Washington's family. Yorkshire is dismal flat going hereabouts—villages "frankly mean and ugly, roads criss-crossed by railways, sluggish rivers, and unlovely canals." Further south the road had kindlier, lovelier ways and villages to our liking—Blyth especially, "a quiet well-to-do little place," with its priory church remaining from part of an eleventh century Benedictine foundation, and a Norman nave well worth exploring.

No traveler should be over-sensitive to place names, yet granted my failing, Worksop, four miles farther, would be a dull country town by any other name, too unforgivably dull to use as headquarters for what lay ahead, though there be those to counsel the same. In its day it "had a great produce of liquorice," which was just about what it ought to have produced, though in good old Leland's report to Henry VIII he could describe the place as "a praty market of two streates and metely welle buildid."

"There's some will talk of lords and knights,
And some of yeomen good;
But I will tell you of Will Scarlòck
Little John, and Robin Hood.

There were outlaws, 'tis well known,
And men of noble blood;
And many a time was their valour shown
In the forrest of merry Sheerwood."

My heart feels heavy when I consider a child who cannot look back to its first experience inside a theatre with a thrill to last a lifetime. At the age of nine I saw "Robin Hood," and the rapture surrounding both theatre and Robin Hood has never left me. And now, at the age of forty-five, they are trying to tell me there was never such a person as Robin Hood! Inform me next there were and are no theatres. The loss of Santa Claus I bore unmoved, I have bravely faced the fact that King Arthur

and his knights may be more rather than less mythical, but to have the reality of Robin Hood wrenched from me at my age is too severe. Let Arthur go; he was ever the hero of the upper classes. Robin Hood from first to last has been the ideal of the every day people—yeoman against privilege, be the privileged peers or churchmen. And then to be told that “no doubt the name originally belonged to some mythical forest elf” and that it was applied by later twelfth to fifteenth century ballad-writers to any robber leader who made his home in forest or moor, defied oppression, especially of the cruel forest laws, and because of his attitude toward them that hath, won popular approval and sympathy.

What of it? Robbers did exist and live in forests and had, no doubt about it, comrades like Little John and Will Scarlett and Friar Tuck and Much the Miller’s son; and surely they fell in love, and why not with Maid Marian?

“A bonny fine maid of a noble degree . . .
 . . . For shee was a gallant dame.”

I like to read a book which begins “Robin Hood was born at Locksley, in the County of Nottingham, in the reign of King Henry II, and about the year of Christ 1160.” (You note that “about”—caution enough.) I take less satisfaction in reading that his real name was Robert Fitzooth, which would “more or less naturally” come to be pronounced Robin Hood. Nor do I wish to be told that Will Scarlett’s real name was Scadlock, but it is comforting to have it all put down with certitude. Research should confine itself to less heroic fields.

Fiction or fact, the truth remains that Robin Hood was endowed with the virtues which appealed to the mediæval every day man, and with the peep at long-ago life such knowledge gives one is added the realization that through the ages certain standards of every day men have altered no great amount. Robin Hood stood in large terms for a readjustment in the distribution of property—

... "For I never yet hurt any man
That honest is and true;
But those who give their minds to live
Upon other mens due."

His manner of going about a "redistribution" was to rob the rich to endow the poor. Many the propertied souls in Great Britain who feel that is exactly the method of the present Labour Government! Robin Hood brought up to date—"most humane,"—well hardly even that; "and the prince of all robbers," robbers most certainly! The good outlaw had his pieties, earnest he was in his devotion to the Virgin, but in what derision did he hold all clergy, from monks to "byshoppes and thyse archbyshoppes"!

"... With fryars and monks, with their fine sprunks,
I make my chieftest prey."

Let those believe in his existence who will.

MAPS are unromantic guides at times. Not the Michelin nor the R.A.C. map held out a hint that on our route between Selby and Lincoln stretched Sherwood Forest. It needed that rain in North Duffield to make me aware of what really lay ahead. "Sherwood Forest and the Dukeries," Muirhead heralds in big black print. That strange word "the Dukeries" echoed ominously, as a cross between coaleries and dunking cake in tea. The Dukeries are the parks of four dukes, all adjoining, and all four parks and much more land in Nottinghamshire once part of Sherwood Forest. Nowadays, by receiving the proper permit on request at the various ducal estate offices, certain days of the week one can wander the great parks of Welbeck (the Duke of Portland), Clumber (Duke of Newcastle), and Thorsby (once Duke of Kingston, now Earl Manvers), on foot, on bicycle, with horse-drawn vehicle, but no motors are allowed inside the estates.

Therefore Parkers were searching for bicycles on which to go exploring in and around Sherwood Forest after that hero of

mine who lived in the woods. You can motor thereabouts on broad, main roads, much trafficked, lined with telegraph poles. We motored it all first, to get the lay of the land. But the ideal performance is to take up residence at either the most delightful Hop Pole Hotel, at Ollerton, or the less expensive and still more pleasantly situated Normanton Inn on one of the high-roads between Ollerton and Worksop, completely surrounded by woods. Worksop was the only place in all that region where we could find bicycles, so there we left the car and pedaled back to the Normanton Inn. The joy of being on a bicycle again!

And where those bicycles took us! Soon, our first morning, we were able to turn off on a grass path of sorts, and from that to other paths and roads and byways, all on the Duke of Portland's property, all more or less wild, most of the forests and moors curious indeed to behold their first bicycles. June, not having my hearty bicycle past, got "pooped" every so often, whereupon she sprawled flat on the greensward, and we rested, hot and happy. One road led between two lakes with Welbeck Abbey in the distance, which is as near as the public is now allowed to come, nor were we quite certain we were supposed to be that near. (The lodge-keeper at the magnificent Lion Gate told us that "in olden times" people were permitted to view much of the estate; in olden times meaning, in reality, a few years ago. Nowadays the Duke could not afford the necessary servants to keep the place looking as he would have the public see it. Goodness knows how many hundreds on the pay-roll that would mean!)

For woods and wildness our bicycles carried us to all our grateful eyes could look upon, yet out of curiosity, had there been more time, I should have taken advantage of a chance to look upon the handiwork of the amazing fifth Duke of Portland, the "invisible prince." One guide book has it that he employed 15,000 men a year, which would a bit unsettle my faith in guide books, another puts the number at well over a thousand, which seems enough, for the everlasting building the

Duke indulged himself in, seeing that he was born into a finished house. And such building! As if cramped for space—it is miles to the nearest house; the kitchen garden alone in the Duke's day covered ten acres—all of his construction was underground. As one approaches the great mansion, if and when, knobs of skylights protrude above the ground. Underneath, reached through elaborate and broad subterranean passages, is a ballroom 159 by 63 feet, also used as a picture gallery and hung with treasures of Van Dyck, Murillo, Raphael, Reynolds . . . Some of the paintings the fifth Duke didn't so much care for, so one day he and a boy of twelve made a bonfire of thousands of pounds' worth.

Also underground is a riding school, four hundred feet in length. Outside was already the Tan Gallop, "one of the wonders of Welbeck," a building a quarter of a mile in length, 60,000 square feet of glass in the roof—Oh, we Dukes! So—we can ride outside under the sky, outside under 60,000 square feet of glass, or under the ground—and if artificial light was needed, the Duke had 8,000 gas jets. Maybe he did need 15,000 workers, when you consider the digging necessary for a room four hundred feet long, over a hundred wide, and fifty high. Good gracious, good gracious! Nor are we done with burrowing. I don't know if he finished his three subterranean libraries—workmen had been three years digging out the soil—nor his underground church. The kitchen and culinary offices were evidently completed, "on an extensive scale, although there is only His Grace to cook for." His unchanging diet was a chicken a day, half served at one of his two daily meals, the other half at the other. For the daily chicken there was a miniature railway, to convey chicken from kitchen to Duke.

Eighteen years he burrowed and built—of tunnelling there were fifteen miles round Welbeck Abbey. "His Grace has a deeply-rooted dislike to the observance of the outside world." Even on the rare occasions when he gave a party he himself never appeared. When his building kept him moving about his

estate, and he supervised all construction in person, orders were given that no workman or tenant should ever appear to recognise him. When he drove out in his carriage drawn by six small ponies, he was protected from the world by dark curtains. "A man of enormous wealth, he can afford to gratify every transient whim."

Far have we come from Robin Hood. Yet not so far. "He stood for the redistribution of property," and therefore took from the rich to endow the poor. Certainly the power to indulge in such diggings as a Duke could spend an enormous fortune on over years,—the like of such shovelings must have helped pave the way to the modern Robin Hood, the Labour Party. The fifth Duke of Portland was seven hundred years too late to be robbed of his wealth under a greenwood tree, fifty years too early to have the government tax him around \$100,000 a year on an income of \$250,000. Nor would hiding in an underground passage escape the tax collector. Robin Hood today could waylay about a thousand British citizens whose incomes are over \$125,000 a year—a thousand out of 48,000,000. Then he could have had the job of redistributing it to, among other recipients, some two million or so unemployed. He would have had his hands full. For his own happiness we had better leave him under a greenwood tree in Sherwood Forest, for all that in his twelfth-century efforts at redressing "wrongs" and in Ramsay MacDonald's twentieth century efforts, the same verses of the ancient ballad might do as well for the trials of both:

... "Bold Robin Hood had a sword of the best

Thus ere he would take any wrong,
His courage was flush, he'd venture a brush,
And thus they fell to it ding dong.

The very first blow that [the enemy] gave,
He made his broad weapon cry twang;
Twas over the head, he fell down for dead,
O that was a damnable bang! ..."

That warm, sunny Saturday it was Sherwood Forest and not subterranean passages we were concerned with, and on we rode, past lakes, up and down hills, then into deep thick woods on a path of almost solid moss, and where another moss path cut ours at right angles we sat on moss and ate our lunch. More deep moss paths, then grass paths and then wider grass paths, now over a heather and bracken moor, then a public road again with a whiz of a long coast—to, horrors, the main road, which we forsook at once, nor could we locate in any direction an unused way to Ollerton. Finally I screwed up my courage—I am a woefully timid creature about such things—rang the bell of one of the myriad lodge houses on the Portland estate, and falteringly asked the keeper in shirt sleeves if we might proceed through a great gate marked “Private” and more, to make the Private very clear. Never was there a kinder gate-keeper—he all but presented us with the Duke’s entire holdings. Just go any place we wanted, and if anyone stopped us, tell them — gave us permission to ride where we pleased. There! Woods lined the roads on either side, turf between road and woods, dotted here and there with the most venerable oaks our eyes had ever seen, seven hundred to a thousand years old. Robin Hood’s Larder we inspected, an oak big enough to hold a dozen people in it, now burnt out inside, where the outlaw once hung his venison. Good trencher-men were those comrades in Lincoln Green,—

“Venison and fowls were plenty there,
With fish out of the river:
King Richard swore, on sea or shore,
He never feasted better.”

June got more of a thrill out of the Duke’s hunting-box than remnants of legendary outlaws. It is a small house built without a nail, of carved soft wood set in the gayest of gardens, where scarlet-coated hunters are fed better than were Robin Hood their host, or not so well.

There came a right-angle turn to the wildest stretch of all,

Birkland Forest, every now and then a giant hoary oak deep in woods of youngster, to the oak, birches, chestnuts, other oaks. At the Major Oak, ninety feet around at its base, 1400 years old, they say, we came upon people again, trippers to gaze upon perhaps the oldest tree in England. What Leland would call "very Wooddi Ground," all this, where in the days of our unsophisticated past the youth of nearby Edwinstowe wandered early each May Day to gather decorations for the doors and windows of lovers and neighbors before they got up in the morning. Later came the May Pole. May Day came to be thought of as Robin Hood's day.

My mind shifted back to Robin Hood again as I stood on a curbing in Edwinstowe and watched the annual co-operative children's parade—children and children and children from near and far, each with a tin cup for refreshments, children of a class who had little or no voice in their own affairs in the days when an outlaw was their champion.

Tea at the Hop Pole in Ollerton gave us energy for the last lap back to the Normantown Inn, all the way through woods. Twenty-five miles of rare going had been ours, and sunshine all the day.

THE only way you can get a permit to intrude on Sunday upon the Duke of Newcastle's estate, Clumber Park, is to ask to be allowed to attend church, that church built some forty years ago for the Duke's private use at a cost of \$200,000. Getting there, now through woods, alongside a lake, now over rolling fields was even lovelier than the softly-tinted redstone interior, "one of the finest neo-Gothic creations in England." That Sunday with candles and incense, and the sun-shafts through colored windows—left to one's own thoughts, without the service, the soul could have journeyed high and far. As it was, a handful of tenants and employees and I listened to a High Church divine compare Eve and the Virgin, to the glory of the Virgin and the scandal of Eve—a sermon passable for Robin Hood's day, but what a waste of words for 1930!

I rode off with a woman from the estate and again screwed up my courage to ask some questions as we pumped up hill and coasted through woods. Her story held, as every place in England, the Robin Hood motif—so much for the rich and landed estates to pay in taxation that little of the old days was left. According to my source of information, who was assistant organist at the church, when the seventh Duke died in 1928, death duties came to \$2,500,000. His estate is now being held for the present heir, the young Earl of Lincoln, until he is thirty, which is seven years off. What will happen in the meantime? The woman felt the future for those on the estate, for the estate itself, uncertain. The Duke had been forced to let many servants go, yet even so the place could not begin to pay for itself. . . . After I left her I dismounted at a barn to watch a sow with a litter of wee fresh very clean pigs, untroubled by how to finance an empire. A pig in England is happier than some silk-hatted gentry. Both die in the end, one for bacon, the other for taxes—only the silk hat has had years to fuss and fume over taxation, while the pig has never dreamed that the hand which filled the trough led to anything but the peace of a full stomach.

Those being sufficient observations for a sunny Sunday, I bore off for twenty miles of bicycling on roundabout unused roads every foot, except when I neared the ugly industrialism of Wellow, an unending delight. In the stretch of twelve miles of Sunday going I passed exactly two cars and one boy on foot. The only sight that day, given over to the joy of merely propelling oneself about the loveliness of Nottinghamshire, was Rufford Abbey, where Dukes have been hosts to English kings, come long ago to hunt in Sherwood Forest. Just to gaze upon that house of soft red stone through its great iron gate gives a hint of how livable and desirable a ducal residence can be. It is hard to imagine any home in England set in more glorious woods. And still the sun shone!

Dukeries explorings galore we had planned for the next day—Clumber, Thorsby. . . . No sooner were we well started in

Clumber Park than June's back tire got a puncture, our only puncture in over 5,000 miles! Oh for the ministrations of Robin Hood to women in distress! Instead, the nearest aid to be had was in Worksop, and so . . . we took turns pushing the wretched thing the five miles back to that drab liquorice town. The English name for bicycle is "push-cycle"! The one who wasn't pushing could dash off where she would on my whole bicycle. By the time we got to Worksop it was too late to do anything but get the car and come on back to Normanton Inn and pack. Yet another wrenched parting from yet another corner of Old Romance. . . .

"Where will the Duke live?" some one asks in "As You Like It."

"They say he is already in the forest of Arden and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the Old Robin Hood of England . . . and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world."

CHAPTER 22

FROM LINCOLN TO TATTERSHALL TO BOSTON TO OAKHAM TO STAMFORD TO PETERBOROUGH, BUT SANDRINGHAM WAS A SAD MISTAKE. THERE WAS STILL A GOOD BIT OF THE DAY LEFT—



DO YOU know one of the things which does its full share to help wreck traveling for many a soul who deserves better? It is the feeling of having to be in a certain place at a certain time. No one can travel happily with a clock or a calendar. "When are you going to be where?" "I don't know." Only thus can the ideal be approached.

Twice in three months we thought we had to be some place by a certain day and hour, and it nearly broke our hearts. But this first time our cash was perilously low, and also it had been long days since we last had mail, therefore we thought the occasion warranted our trying to reach Lincoln before three and bank closing. It did not, of course. It was our first experience of driving as fast as we could go, mile after mile, feeling as if we were on the beach at Galveston. . . . When we saw we were attempting the utterly impossible (I bit holes in a crawl-in freight train at a crossing, shot a toll collector) we still kept on, and reached the clock in the fifteenth-century-town gateway at Stonebow over High Street and asked the traffic policeman the way to the bank at exactly three o'clock. "Too late," announced the traffic policeman. We turned down High Street

anyhow. The bank entrance was locked. I crept dejectedly in a back door, was welcomed as if late comers were the most desirable of customers, and our mail was handed over with enthusiasm. At that hour I did not dare so much as hint how poor we were, but when we stood at the polite entrance next morning waiting for the bank to open we possessed between us exactly two pennies. However we had had tea and read our mail the day before in a sixteenth-century house still standing on the twelfth-century bridge over the Witham, one of the oldest bridges in England, one of the very few remaining with houses.

In York we talked with some Americans who were disappointed with that city, feeling it an anti-climax after Lincoln. "We love Lincoln," wrote myself, "but not as we loved York." But that still allows for a good deal of affection.

Surely London itself is no better a spot to feel English history than Lincoln—the very name is the most historical and unique in all the land. In pre-Roman days the Britons had a forest settlement on the strategic hill; came the Celts and their Linn-dun, "hill-fort of the pool," because in those far-distant days the foot of the hill was an undrained marsh; came Agricola and the Romans and their Lindum Colonia, the "coln" of Lincoln shared by only one other city of the entire Roman world—Cologne on the Rhine, the German Köln. On the top of the hill still stands the Newport Arch, one of the only two Roman gates left in England, through which the ninth or Spanish Legion must often have marched due north along the Ermine Street, that most dramatic looking of all Roman roads on a Michelin map. It ran in an absolutely straight line to the Humber, the first seventeen miles a main road of today.

Came the Saxons. "It is plain that there was no Roman town in Britain whose strength and majesty made a deeper impression on our fathers than the colony of Lindum." Came the Danish invasion of the ninth century. In 941, Edmund, "doer of great deeds," won Lincoln, "bowed low in heathen chains," back to England and to Christ. Came the Normans,

and a castle built by William the Conqueror himself, key to the eastern counties, and Lincoln one of the great cities of England. The Norman sights to see!—not only the castle and the Norman beginnings of the cathedral. Of the city, which spread down the steep hill because castle and cathedral took up so much space in the old town, there is still the early twelfth century Jews House where lived Belaset of Wallingford, the Jewess who was hanged for clipping coins, in one of the earliest of domestic houses in England. There is the House of Aaron the Jew, moneylender of Henry II's day, who could boast to his debtors, the monks of St. Albans, that the very shrines of their saints belonged to him, not them. History continues to surge about Lincoln from the days of William to its sacking by Parliamentary troops in 1644. . . . It was "the birthplace of tanks" in the Great War.

We found quarters with one Mrs. Cooling, most motherly soul with the gayest of wee backyards, our room all but facing the superlative Roman Basilica, were it still standing, or had we come along fifteen hundred years earlier. And then we went forth to explore, which meant mainly, of course, the cathedral.

The details of Lincoln Cathedral are beyond anything else to be seen in England—literally one could spend a lifetime studying the marvelous and exquisite carvings of stone and wood and never be done. Some new delight, some rich reward, is waiting for every new turn of the eyes. Has any one human being ever mastered the fascinating intricacies of the Angel Choir alone? But there was too light an effect to the interior as a whole to inspire our souls. It seemed as if someone must have just mopped the soapsuds off pillars, arches, walls, and left a spotless creamy yellow atmosphere, which even robbed the glorious glass of some of its effect. But ah, the rose windows of the north and south transepts were a delight!

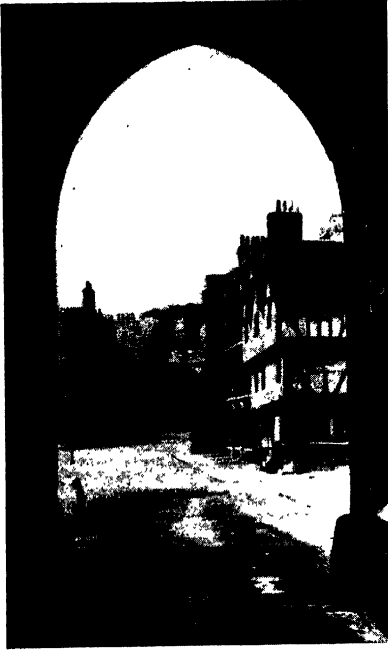
The Minster Yard in the early evening appealed to us as not only worth exploring, but we purchased several ancient buildings and settled down—the fourteenth century Vicars' Court, on the precipitous slope of the hill, the Old Bishop's

Palace, the fourteenth century Cantelupe Chantry, the Chancery—all of them with the Cathedral to gaze upon from their north windows, the roofs of the city and the sweep of Lincolnshire from their south, except the lovely Chancery which faces the east.

What a county is Lincolnshire! Surely it is a corner, as counties go indeed a good-sized corner, where an entire summer should be spent.

There is a castle to see in Lincolnshire which we had never heard of, and once seen, I feel called by the gods of travel to spread its name throughout the world—Tattershall. It is in such very fine print in the guide book you might miss mention of it altogether, for all that it is described as “perhaps the best example of a fortified dwelling in England, and notable for its brickwork.” Tattershall is a rewarding sight, both because of its own peculiar charm, different from any other castle you have ever seen, and because it stands as an example of what public-spirited wealth can mean to posterity. Only twenty-four hours once intervened between Tattershall as a marvelous fifteenth century monument unique in the land, to be gratefully appreciated by uncounted generations to come, and complete destruction. And if you would know what was about to mean destruction—American dollars.

The story of Tattershall's past goes back to the days of Eudo, a knight who came over the Channel with William the Conqueror. It was his son Hugh who founded Kirkstead Abbey, an offshoot of Fountains, which we had explored en route to Tattershall, its lone jagged shaft reaching skywards from a field of grazing sheep being the most meagre extreme of abbey ruins, as its parent Fountains was the most extensive. There is a gem of a little ancient chapel in a lone field nearby, where certain early knights of Tattershall lie buried. Hugh's son Robert received a grant from King John for a market in the village of Tattershall in return for a trained hunting hawk. Tattershall Castle itself was begun in 1231 as a private fortress, built with the sanction of the King, nominal



LINCOLN



CASTLE RISING



NEARING PETERBOROUGH

lord of every castle in the realm. But it was Ralph Cromwell, treasurer of England, who rebuilt the castle on a magnificent scale and with a double purpose, to serve as a splendid residence and to offer a stout resistance to the enemy. Just why this latter in 1440, no one can now be sure, since, while the fifteenth century was one of growing disturbance and discontent, the day was past when it was felt necessary to put a castle to military uses. Such fighting as took place meant battles in the open fields. Perhaps the sight and possessions of so bold-looking a stronghold filled his lordship's ego with content, and since he was paying for it, he could please himself.

So there Tattershall stood, double-moated, with a great brick tower of unusual size and strength, the finest thing of its kind built in England since the twelfth century, and only to be compared with twelfth century keeps in scale. On the other hand, probably no castle in the land was so advanced when it came to comfort. It was first a splendid mansion where my lord could be lavish with hospitality, yet it looked as if it could repel Scots and pirates and French and Yorkists and bring in whom you will. "A highly exceptional building for its period," for any period, indeed. Lord Cromwell pleased himself yet further by building just across the first moat a "College" of chantry priests and a church of grace and loveliness, where Mass could be said daily for his own soul and the souls of his near and dear, and where his and their bones could find rest.

Three details of special interest follow in the matter of Tattershall's future owners—at least of interest to me, considering our summer. There has always been a gap where Tattershall dropped from the records of history and only surmises remained, all wrong. Indeed a guide book of not so long ago, writing of the ruin open to the sky, says "perhaps it was never occupied"! Only very recently, going through old papers at Penshurst, first of our English manor houses, quantities of documents were brought to light showing that Queen Elizabeth granted Tattershall to Sir Henry Sidney of Penshurst, father

of Sir Philip, in return for services in England and Ireland, and giving numerous invaluable details of its state before and during his possession.

Comes the second possessor to touch our personal interest. In time Tattershall is purchased by the Earl of Lincoln. The second Earl, who first concerns us, was a dreadful person, to be sure. He made everybody thoroughly miserable, one of his grievous doings being to take away "a part of the churchyard and put it into his mote, so that divers people were digged up, some green and lately buried, and thrown into the mote to fill up." And then America enters—in the person of no other than Captain John Smith. This I read in his *True Travels*, and worse reading for a dull day could be found. "Within a short time being glutted with too much company, wherein he took small delight, he retired himself into a little wooddie pasture, a good way from any towne . . ." where one Seignior Theadora Polalago, Rider to Henry Earl of Lincoln, was persuaded by his friends "to insinuate into his wooddish acquaintances, whose languages and good discourse, and exercise of riding drew him to stay with him at *Tattershall*."

America steps indirectly into the picture again. The third Earl of Lincoln has a daughter Arabella. I see her spending part, if not all, of her youth in that magnificent and spacious tapestry-hung tower playing in the shade of its frowning turrets, its machicolated galleries. Anon comes Isaac Johnson courting the Lady Arabella,—and in 1630 they sail with Governor Winthrop for the New World, in a ship re-christened the *Arabella* in honor of the daughter of the Earl of Lincoln. The poor dear dies two months after landing, and good Isaac, "richest man in the colony," a month later.

And now the last and most romantic details of ownership, Lord Curzon the hero, the date 1911. Alas, that we could not have the entire story from his own pen! In 1910 "the famous old red brick castle of Tattershall and the four sculptured stone mantelpieces which were made for it by its founder Lord Cromwell in 1440 . . . and are unique in the world, were sold by the

family to whom they had belonged for centuries." In 1911—this is the only and sketchy account left by Lord Curzon—"the castle was acquired by an American Syndicate of speculators, who looked only to profit. The mantelpieces were sold separately," with the idea of offering them for sale in America, which "excited a wave of public wrath and consternation." Lord Curzon himself claimed that if full details of his purchase of Tattershall could be told they would be considered nothing short of "fantastic." But all he set down for the public was: "Finding that there was a very serious and imminent danger that the Castle might be pulled down, or otherwise ruined by the American Syndicate, and learning that there was an interval of twenty-four hours in the course of which it could still be recovered by the payment of a certain profit to them, I intervened to rescue it."

Then came the arduous negotiations for the purchase and return of the fireplaces, lasting from October, 1911, to May, 1912, when he is able to write his friend the Vicar at Tattershall: "The recovery of the fireplaces will be accomplished and announced next week . . ." alas, the worse for their experiences. Followed the most careful, conscientious restoration of the Great Tower, and on Marquis Curzon's death in 1925, Tattershall passed by request to the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest.

All that now remains of what in 1662 was described as "the modern magnificence thereof" is the Great Tower, the guardhouse, and the church.

In general plan, the Great Tower has a very large room in the middle of each of its upper three floors, with numerous small turret- and wall-chambers, a turret stairway leading from ground floor to the battlements, and communicating with each of the upper floors. On the first upper floor was the great hall of the Tower, used as dining- and court-room; on the second the great chamber or with-drawing room, used as was the custom for sitting—and bedroom. It is now hung with tapestries and has some ancient furniture about, to give a slight idea of its

former livableness. On this floor also is a most beautiful vaulted gallery in the thickness of the east wall, which may have been designed for Cromwell's personal use, as small private audience chamber. Probably the third floor was set apart for the women, with a great room for their special "bower." Above was the roof with its parapet walk, and a covered gallery just below.

But what gives such unusual character to each great bricked room, besides their deeply-recessed, brick-vaulted windows, are the large sculptured stone fire places, each an individual creation of a rare artist. Walls tapestry-hung, floors softly-carpeted, huge logs crackling in the great fire places, throwing their gold flickerings on the perfect finish of the red bricks, on mellow carved beams and rafters—so must it once have been. Add outside the buildings for a hundred or more servants, a court for play, two moats for protection—or looks!—the graceful church and chantry college under the trees across the moats.... "The completeness of the whole design gives it a place second to none among the castles and dwelling-houses of the later Middle Ages in England."

Nobody ever tore from turreted roof to moats with the speed of Parkers when a downpour descended in sheets and we suddenly realized the top of the car was down. Like mad we descended the stairs, to rescue drenched possessions. And the top down again before we finished buying post-cards at the guardhouse.

After Tattershall we did what everyone is supposed to do—drove over the strange Lincolnshire fenlands to Boston. Miles away the "Stump," far-famed tower of Boston's far-famed parish church and higher than any cathedral tower in England, did what it is supposed to do. It made itself visible over a third of Lincolnshire and forty miles to sea. Toward it we steered, and at its base we made port. Indeed nautical terms are the ones to use for Boston, for after the Conquest it was the second port in the kingdom, and during the latter part of the thirteenth century, the first and foremost. But rivers and sea behaved toward Lincolnshire as they did in southern England—rivers silted up,

sea,—as Leland wrote of one Lincolnshire port, “sumtym a great haven towne, the old town clean consumed and eten by the sea.” Boston’s river, Witham, silted up, and the town became in the seventeenth century a “decayed and ruined port.” Some there may be who feel concern over the fate of Boston’s shipping, up or down, but to us who so soon weigh anchor and are off, it is only the glorious parish church of St. Botolph, with its magnificent tower crowned by the perfect octagonal lantern, which matters—possession enough for one town.

And yet, of course, it did matter very much to us, one way and another, that “there was probably no town in England that sent forth so many of its best citizens to the great work of colonizing America as this of Boston.” At any rate, along with Governor Winthrop sailed Isaac Johnson and his wife, Lady Arabella, that daughter of the Earl of Lincoln of our Tattershall, from a Boston which, while no longer flourishing and great, still boasted one of the glorious churches of England, a fine Guildhall of red brick, a proud Grammar School. From such a Boston after seventy-six days of cramped and tedious sailing (did the Lady Arabella think now and then of the spacious halls at Tattershall?) to a feeble and almost starving colony in a wilderness. Five days later Governor Winthrop records: “We went to Mattachusetts to find a place for our sitting down.” An Englishman who obviously never viewed the lay of the land with his own eyes writes “they first called their settlement ‘Tri-mountain’ from three lofty peaks.” On September 17, 1630, an order was passed “That Trimountaine shall be called Boston.” Three years later John Cotton, Vicar of Lincolnshire Boston, preacher in the very church of St. Botolph and for the manner of the same convicted of Non-conformity, along with other prominent men of the town, set sail for the struggling namesake of their old and known England. Do you call to mind the remarks of the New York driver in “Martin Chuzzlewit,” that “it brought Old York home to him quite vivid, on account of its being so exactly unlike in every respect”?

Over one of the loveliest of English roads, A.152 to be

exact, to Grantham, with another parish church worth miles of going, and the Angel Inn, oldest and one of the most famous in the kingdom; and then quite out of our way over glorious country to gaze upon Belvoir Castle (which you pronounce Beever) crowning its low-wooded mound against the late afternoon glow. There are noteworthy pictures to be seen in the Duke of Rutland's collection, one of the finest in England, but we were too late for the rare sights of the interior. Instead we bore on through lovely villages and quiet peaceful rolling countryside, green and soft in the summer evening, to Oakham—and stopped. Not that we had intended to stop at Oakham, for all that it was late enough, and far had we journeyed and much had we seen. We were spending the night in Stamford. But Oakham and the White Crown Hotel, old coaching inn with its green shutters and geraniums, looked too attractive.

Rutland is the very smallest county in all England, Oakham its county town, which exists more or less for the Cottesmore Hunt—nor can you spend much time in the British Isles without realizing Hunts are vitally, critically important things. The Crown Inn reeks Hunt. But we, who know as much about fox hunting as we do about cricket, still found much to reward us in Oakham. The only remains of the ancient castle, because the rest dated back to the days of wood and has long since disappeared, is the late Norman banqueting hall, which stands lost in a field and orchard behind the church. Its boast is a collection of horse-shoes of every age and shape nailed to the wall—every person of royalty and every peer crossing into the manor holdings for the first time must make his or her contribution. Queen Elizabeth has (?) hers, Queen Victoria hers, on right up to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. We especially liked Oakham's old Butter Cross with the stocks of bygone days and ways of punishment still in place.

IF I let it be known all we saw and did on one Wednesday, August 20th, my very friends would forsake me in dismay.

"Of all the mad, wild, see-the-world days!" begins the diary. As I read on I am appalled myself.

I have remarked that twice all summer we allowed ourselves to travel under pressure. This day was the second of them and to what disillusioning purpose! We had been made to think Sandringham was something we must see, that palace of the ruling house of England where King and Queen spend much time. On some unlucky day I read that Sandringham was to be open to the public on Wednesday, August 20th, until four o'clock, for the Benefit of Something or Other. In the first place, we later learned we could have seen the grounds any Wednesday or Thursday, and in the second place it wasn't worth looking at anyhow. Of course, it is the King's and Queen's private business, I suppose, where they spend their time. But of course all the miles we were ruining our dispositions and almost our lives trying to reach Sandringham before four and yet see all there was to behold en route, we were convinced we were headed toward one of the great sights of England. It served us right to run out of gas on a heathery moor about 3.30 about two miles from Sandringham.

Stamford—only to think of tearing through Stamford! Of all the towns we failed to visit properly in England, which is over 90 per cent of the towns we saw at all, Stamford is the one I most long to return to, "historic, picturesque, stately, aristocratic, and cleanly, all at once." I shall get back there!—and stay at the venerable George Inn, with its sign straddling the street, where in the old coaching days "the distracting bustle exceeded anything ever saw or heard." The George is very peaceful now, as is Stamford. I would look again at the carved and colored angel ceiling of St. John's Church—the Vicar's wife was tidying about our morning and seemed touchingly pleased that travelers had come to see the church where her husband officiated. The churches of Stamford are not only lovely and valuable in their own possessions but they have placed themselves where they should be to set off their virtues and add to the virtues of the town. In case streets of dignified,

delightful old stone houses unlike anything we saw in England make no appeal, or age-old buildings for the poor, or remains of a college which once rivaled Oxford, or grand Burghley House in its nearby park, seat of the Cecils, you may feel hilly Stamford worth a visit in order to gaze upon the grave of an individual who has brought great fame to the town—Daniel Lambert. He weighed 739 lbs., his legs measured over three feet around, waist over nine. ("His diet is said to have been plain, and the quantity moderate, and he never drank anything stronger than water.")

After treasuring a picture of one of England's fascinating towns calling the spirit to a past of both deeds and dignity, the dignity still clinging, I read with horror which is stilled only by the assurance that, after all, the danger is past: "The fierce opposition of the then Marquis of Exeter to the proposed Great Northern Railway, which required a part of Burghley Park, alone, in all probability, prevented Stamford from being made the great central station between London and York." Noble Marquis, devoid of all implications of Progress.

The stretch of road and country and villages from Stamford to Peterborough we decided was one of the loveliest in England, and Castor is a village I shall spend the night in when I revisit Stamford. That entire road I shall walk or bicycle, lingering at Long Thorpe.

Peterborough Cathedral, says my diary, "we loved." Says June's: "Inside the cathedral was lovely. Very white and new looking, but very pure Norman. I never saw any building that reminded me more of a cold basement where laundresses congregate to do their washing. Peterborough had that soapy smell. However, it also had the graves of my beloved Mary Stuart and Catherine of Aragon, poor lady." It *once* had the grave, supposedly at least, of Mary Stuart, who now lies buried in Westminster. In Peterborough under a Scottish flag is a slab which marks where formerly her troubled bones may have lain, her slab subscribed for by the "Marys" of England, Cather-

ine's by the "Catherines." Peterborough has a glorious Norman nave!

Over King's Lynn in the sun to, at last, Sandringham. June calls the place "a fright," I "ugly old palace or what, and such mobs! The grounds were like Christmas week at Macy's. One gate-keeper told us that while this was a special occasion, still every Wednesday brought about 10,000 people! The excitement of the occasion to us was to discover our wee Austin completely hemmed in by large and forbidding limousines right, left, behind, and ahead! By the time we got us out of that solid mass of cars with the help of a most kindly Englishman we could have qualified for strategists in Alexander's army."

Sandringham completely out of our systems, we went back to explore Castle Rising, which the guide book had made us feel the need of doing by calling it "perhaps the most interesting of Norfolk villages." It had the remains of a good Norman castle with laborious earth-works, a twelfth century over-restored Norman church, but lovely in its quiet tree-shaded old churchyard, an ancient "charity" for old folks, and delightful winding ways about its gardened cottages, and tea in the garden of the Black Horse Inn. June scornfully remarks: "The castle was filled with young boys about seven and thereabouts and half the pigeons of this world."

Since morning we had seen Oakham, Stamford, Peterborough, Sandringham, Castle Rising and had driven about ninety miles. Yet the real romance and adventure of the day and wild undreamt of miles of driving lay ahead.

CHAPTER 23

SO WE EXPLORED FOR THE PEDDAR'S WAY AND MADE THE PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM



ONE of the most fascinating ways to travel is to hunt for something, attempt to track down an off-the-map treasure. What unguessed paths a search can lead one along, what eventful contacts en route! For some reason there was a road in England which appealed to me beyond all others, an ancient Neolithic track-way, worn hard with the feet of primitive man before ever a Roman set foot in the land. The Romans in turn made use of it to reach their settlement near Brancaster-on-the-Wash and no doubt straightened it a good bit, as was their wont. Today parts of it are used for motor roadways. But I knew there were stretches which were green and abandoned, lined with bracken and trees and a low ancient earth-bank, where one could sit . . . and watch the ages of England's building go by: dark Iberians with their flint arrow-heads . . . Roman chariots . . . Danish warriors . . . Norman conquerors in coats of mail. . .

But to locate a road which was not on any of our maps! In lovely Holme, most attractive of modern seaside resorts, with its air of well-bred unobtrusive prosperity, I finally in my despair stopped a man who was going down the road with a cup of hot tea. He could do nothing more than look blank at

the name of Peddar's Way, as others had done. Instead he all but dropped the cup of tea on the spot, so eager did he become. "Think of that now, you know about the Peddar's Way!" I insisted he should first deliver the tea, and then began our long enthusiastic conversation.

Here I had stumbled upon a man one would be apt to term quite uneducated, who once in a burst of ambition had bought a batch of second-hand books, sight unseen as it were. He wanted some books. Most of them he had no use for, but among the number happened to be an old history of Norfolk County, and that he read from cover to cover. And there he learned of the Peddar's Way, which met the sea close toward Holme, and in the years to follow, such time as he could spare had gone to exploring that ancient trackway. Never had he found anyone with whom he could share his enthusiasm, and here, suddenly, walking down the road to deliver a cup of hot tea to some one in a fruit booth, a woman stops him and asks about the Peddar's Way! Years of reading, of wandering, focus upon that one all-but-unbelievable encounter—the good soul radiated joy and thanksgiving that at last before he left this earth he could pour out all he knew. It was as if the hand of the Lord had been guiding me and him!

But alas, his contact with the Way had been slow searchings on foot, and familiarity had etched its route too distinctly on his mind. Up and down the roads of Norfolk we toured, east and west, north and south, and never could we be sure. "There! That looked like it!" and out we'd dash and back we'd run and sniff, and walk a ways, and decide yes, and decide no, and look north and south, east and west, and get back into the car. Since I have read what little has been authentically written about the Way, I am sure that now and then we must have been "warm" if not actually "hot"—but how tell then? After miles on end of late afternoon and early evening exploring we finally came to Dorking, and again the Lord guided me. A man was talking to a woman in that village and says I: that is the man to ask about the Peddar's Way. I drew the car up at a tactful distance

and waited, letting men I felt could tell me nothing pass by. At last the conversation was over, and just as the man was about to turn into his own doorway I nabbed him. "Can you tell me anything about the Peddar's Way?"

Religions are founded on less success than I stumbled upon. He had walked every inch of the Peddar's Way which was now traceable! Like the man with the hot tea, this most pleasant doctor could scarcely believe he had such a chance to share his great enthusiasm. He dashed into his house and came out with a map which we spread over the hood, and we were off—in conversation. "Here you see the Way easily, but at this point a cultivated field has ploughed up all traces . . . but here, near Brettenham, you can easily pick it up again. . . . Of course the loveliest stretch is from Wretham to Roudham Heath . . . toward evening—about like this . . . lined with gnarled pines, wild crab-apple trees, thickets of bramble. . . . But it's a bit late to be starting out tonight, isn't it?"

The name Walsingham came into my mind. "Our Lady of Walsingham" was at one time the most famous, the wealthiest shrine in the kingdom, outrivalling Canterbury, the dream of the devout or uneasy since twelfth century Richoldie, and a quaint name that for a lady, built her chapel to the Virgin and her son founded the Augustinian Priory, through grants and lands to Edwy, his clerk, and that is quite a name for a man. Almost from the foundation of the priory to the Dissolution there was one unceasing movement of pilgrims to and from Walsingham, the image of the Virgin, in a blaze of jewels and gold and silver, the primary object of their journey. The Milky Way in the heavens was known to point toward the shrine; on earth "Walsingham's Green Way" led to the Virgin and her most miraculous powers. Along that way trod Henry III, Edward I and II, David Bruce, King of Scotland, Queen Catherine, in thanksgiving for Flodden Field; Henry VII made his prayers and vows for help and deliverance during his troubled reign. Most surprising to the Virgin, Henry VIII walked barefoot from Barham and hung a golden chain around

the Virgin's neck. (He got it safely back anon no doubt.) Nor have we any record of what the Virgin and her jewels thought of Erasmus, though he has left an excellent colloquy of what he thought of the Virgin—and a touch of humanity to make the whole world kin:

"Must those give to the Virgin who are not inclined?" he is asked.

"Not at all; but a kind of pious shame brings some to the point, that they give if anyone is standing by though they would not if no observer were present; or at least they give somewhat more largely than they would otherwise have done."

And the end of that image which had fired many a pilgrim, as it had filled to overflowing every hostel in Walsingham century after century?—Burnt at Smithfield as "the old syster of Walsingham," Latimer called her. The power she had known, the homage which had been hers!

I would see Walsingham, though certain the charm of the gabled and timbered hostels was as vanished as Virgin and shrine. Walsingham was in this general neighborhood.

"Is Walsingham a good place to spend the night?"

"You might find it especially interesting this evening," the friendly doctor answered, "as it's the last night of the Pilgrimage and Festival of Our Lady of Walsingham." We could scarcely believe our ears.

If ever we drove like possessed it was along those weird unmarked roads from Dorking to Walsingham, trying to remember the directions of the Dorking doctor and never a human being to ask were we right or wrong, and always his "Of course, you may be too late" to plague us.

Too late? It was as if we had been laying plans days in advance, to insure our arriving at the proper moment.

Nowadays the shrine is in the Parish Church of St. Mary, and there breathless we entered . . . to find ourselves back in a mediæval world.

The church was packed with travelers from near and far, a dark mass amidst the stone pillars and arches, lit by count-

less candles, incense adding its spell. The most notable feature of the church of St. Mary is the highly enriched octagonal font, raised on three steps in the shape of a Maltese cross, and on these steps, no other places being available, we sat us down. Of the unfamiliar complexity of all that went on around us for the rest of that evening I am too ignorant of High Church matters to write. We sat, we stood, we kneeled. There was a sermon of exhortation which surely word for word could have been uttered unchanged in the most fiery days of Rome's papal influence—indeed, the Reformation was publicly bewailed. The preacher bemoaned the lack of understanding of those who now tread sacred Westminster, and one phrase stuck fast—"atheists, agnostics, English Jews and Americans." We laid low, and all but sniffed the stake. . . . Came a remarkable procession of church dignitaries in emblazoned robes about the church, boys swinging incense, Latin chants, blessings waved upon the pilgrims by the prelate most high, and finally the candle-procession in which the entire congregation, each bearing a candle, joined. When they marched in the darkened night about the ancient parish church, and around the graves and old trees, all chanting, it was a rare sight to see. By the merest accident we were there; in what volume did we feel our gratitude!

That late night we slept eight miles away in Wells-by-the-Sea, Walsingham hostels, as of old, being filled with pilgrims, in an attic room where the matted insides of a dirty old pillow had been shaken through an unsuspected hole all over the floor, and no time to clean up; on the cracked marble mantelpiece rested the photograph of a trained nurse in a disabled frame near a bottle of poison.

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CHAPTER 24

THE BROADS, WHICH IS GOOD ENGLISH IN ENGLAND, AND ONE
OF ITS ABSOLUTELY FIRST CLASS OFFERINGS



AND now I may be allowed to tell of the Norfolk Broads. For one thing, early that morning the Duchess of York had eventually given birth to her second baby, and so that matter was settled and off our minds. However, the fact that it was a girl meant such a crushing blow to our own fourteen-year-old daughter that it was imperative to do something to divert her thoughts—and conversation—from the obstacles nature seemed possessed to interpose in the problem of male succession to the English throne. Presidents are born fairly regularly with us, yet in a way to afford no excitement whatever to the population at large. That fact and the absence of any gold coach when they ride to the Capitol on matters of state mean a certain drabness to American life.

For another thing the sun was shining in England.

For another thing we had made up our minds to go sailing on the Norfolk Broads even if the Duchess of York had never been going to have a second baby at all, and if it had been pouring.

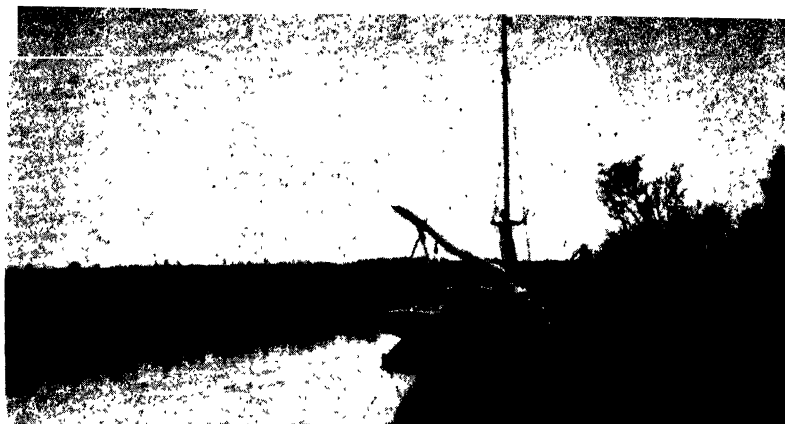
The Broads! Cathedrals, castles, ruined abbeys, old masters, you can behold in a dozen foreign lands. Only England possesses The Broads, and only Norfolk in England. You

must therefore go to Norfolk and you must go soon. For one of these tragic days, though our rôle in life is not to scatter gloom about, there may be precious little Broads left. And before that day, basing conclusions on historical sources, there may be so many others on the Broads, river traffic will be nearing the state of Regent Street at Piccadilly Circus. Because it appears that everyone who has been on the Broads once goes back practically every summer until he dies, and every year staithe or docks swarm with novices who have never hoisted a sail in their lives nor oiled a motor, yearning to be off on the *Away-a-Whyle*, the *Carissima*, *Happy Days*, or the *Love Nest*. As for us, we were waiting for the *Mada*. Nor was it anything short of stupendous luck that the *Mada* was on hand to be waited for. "It is most important that the earliest application possible be made for boats." We had applied half-an-hour before we took possession as captain and crew.

How can you make an early application to do something you don't know exists? Exactly one week to the day before we stepped aboard the *Mada* at Wroxham Bridge we had never in our lives heard of the Norfolk Broads. One week after we had lived through seven days of one of the most ideal holidays in our lives.

It isn't so much that God specially blesses the witless, as it is that only by the witless being blessed has the race survived at all. There is such a preponderance of people who don't know anything! Here were two females, a woman old enough to use some caution and a daughter too young to appreciate the problems involved, planning to set sail for a week on the Norfolk Broads when neither knew anything about boats or Broads.

Did heaven punish such foolhardiness? Punish! On August 15, rain-bound in that seventeenth-century Inn at the cross-roads of that hamlet unknown to man, the torrents slashing against window-panes, wind howling at the corners, my water-logged eye had dawdled upon a paragraph in the guide book which might as easily have been skipped as read. "Broadlands



MOORING ON
OLD MEADOW
DYKE

A BROADS
WHERRY



THE BURE

or the district of the Norfolk Broads, which are shallow lagoons interspersed among expanses of reed and fen, is a level tract of land in the form of a triangle, the apex of which is Norwich. . . . Within this area are about a dozen large 'broads' and twice as many smaller ones, and these, together with the placid and sluggish streams . . . provide about 200 miles of navigable water. This district has long been a favourite holiday resort for anglers and devotees of smooth-water sailing. The villages are often quaint and picturesque, with interesting churches; and there are many fine old manor-houses and a few ruined abbeys and castles. The sunlight—" (sunlight!—for five solid weeks had it not been pouring upon us, one day of sunlight in all that time?) "and moonlight" (who left on earth knew there was still a moon?) "are especially beautiful . . ."

My diary of that night says: "I spent the whole morning with maps and guide books and oh the fun we'll have boating on the Broads if *only* weather will let us!" Dear frozen old soul, after five weeks she could still clutch at dreams.

On August 22nd we reached the Broads and set sail. I now concern myself with the British Government's Weather Report of 1930, which is unemotional and impeccable, and which we influenced in no way.

Largest daily total of rainfall in 1930, 2.83 inches in thunderstorms of June 18th. That incidentally, was the day we set out from London in our maroon-colored open touring Baby Austin. Unequalled—the car was that but I am referring to the government's comments on June 18th's rainfall—on any June day back to 1841, any rain in 1841 being a matter of only academic interest to me.

Under the heading "Sunshine"—the printer has to look in an old unused box for the letters . . . "sunniest week in 1930, Aug. 24-30; mean daily duration 10 hr. 12 min." We were on the Broads, bear in mind, from the 22nd to the 29th, which is merely one detail of the blessings of that week.

Only now, months later, can I appreciate some of our

additional blessings, because I have read and heard so many accounts of other vacations upon the Broads—

1. Neither of us was knocked unconscious by the boom.
2. Neither of us fell overboard.
3. We never permanently lost or broke the "quant."
4. The Primus stove never exploded or set fire to the bedding or poisoned us with deadly fumes.
5. We never were stranded by the tide.
6. We never had a Broads "mist" or "eynd."
7. We never had a gale—by day.
8. We were never rammed by another boat.
9. We were never crushed by a wherry.
10. No cow ever got into the boat, nor did a horse as much as scratch his sides along the cabin in the dark.

As far as that goes, only a single time did we hear two gramophones going at once.

The guide book mentioned Wroxham as "one of the best headquarters for yachting on the Broads." Being very humble and unargumentative on the subject we motored to Wroxham from Norwich, the left back wheel sounding, after certain ministrations of a large Norwich garage, as if it was coming off again. An hour in Wroxham confirmed the admonition as to making boat reservations long in advance. In that town of numerous large and lesser agencies for the renting of water craft there were exactly two floating articles for us to choose between. One was a cabinless wholesome-looking wide affair with a single sail. At night you spread a mattress on the bottom of the boat, lashed down some sort of an awning, and retired.

The other was, to my dubious eyes, a fearfully complicated and large and very beroped craft, twenty-two feet long, what we professionals call sloop-rigged and carvel-built, if you get me, with a cabin to sleep three, lifting top, cupboards for crockery, and quantities of ropes, each attached to something, no doubt, and addling to the imagination.

I leaned to the no-cabin boat, because it had oarlocks and a pair of oars and my feeling of the moment, not having func-

tioned in a sail boat for thirty years, was that after all perhaps we'd be happier and see enough and get more exercise, and it would be cheaper, if we rowed peacefully about the Broads instead of bothering with such a lot of ropes. We might not have to fuss with the sail at all. June took a look at the cabin boat with its bunks and cupboards and seats and portholes with curtains, and would fare forth in nothing else. My heart sank in despair. However should we get the thing to go?"

In fact my uneasiness was such that when it came to provisioning at the justly-famed Roy's, that store in Wroxham which will sell you everything you could ever imagine using on a cruise from an outfit to make you look like a Rear Admiral (though the vogue for looking like a Rear Admiral on the Broads has been superseded by shorts) to a can of sardines,—when it came to provisioning, I wondered whether it really would be necessary to count on seven days' needs. Should we be alive tomorrow? On the other hand, might we find ourselves becalmed or grounded or generally disabled so that we might be needing provisions for a month?

We were both nimble and efficient when it came to stowing away our purchases in the various cupboards of the *Mada*, not appreciating at the time the fact that a week was hardly long enough to remember in a hurry behind just which of five doors or in what open compartment out of four was the sugar, and were the matches port or starboard, and why was the Flit mixed with canned grape fruit? Incidentally we reprovisioned in the middle of the week at Potter Heigham and to show our massively efficient reckoning we presented the Yacht Company at the end of the week with one unused can of tomatoes, one-third of a jar of strawberry jam, a quantity of paper plates, because after the first meal we ate everything out of one each, and some soup cubes. (It got too hot for soup.)

Car stored, boat and insurance, ominous thought, paid for (£6:10:0 for one week fully outfitted, "stoves, crockery, cutlery, bedding and everything necessary, except towels"), there was no further excuse for not stepping into the boat. But once

in, there would be no excuse for not sailing off. There is a more horrible sensation to do with boats and water than seasickness: it is that utterly gone near-panic when you have no idea on earth which rope to haul on to pull up which sail and what direction you move the tiller in to go where. "It is assumed that hirers of larger craft" (the *Mada* ranked as "larger") "have had previous experience and are capable of handling same."

I thought of two things which would postpone our departure somewhat. In an inspired moment I announced to the youth waiting to untie us that we should not want the jib sail. Since I had no idea what to do with one, I'd have less idea what to do with two. It took him some little time to remove the jib sail. "Ready now?" and it occurred to me a practical demonstration of how one worked a Primus stove would come in handy. The youth removed the stove to the bank, pumped, lit, pumped, it went out. He pumped, lit, pumped, it went out again. After that went on several times—I didn't care how long he took—it suddenly belched flames to heaven. "Throw it up on the bank if it acts like that in the boat," announced the youth casually and I wondered if there would be anything left of us to do the throwing if it acted like that on the boat. "Well," said the youth a little unenthusiastically, "you've just got to learn about these stoves with experience," and he put it back in the boat. I took hasty mental stock of the provisions purchased which could be eaten raw.

"Ready?"

Whereupon I sunk my pride—and how it scraped both sides of my soul going down!—and asked that youth which rope you pulled on to hoist the sail. The wounds of my crushed spirit began to heal instanter when the youth pulled three different ropes before anything began to happen to the sail. The worst anguish came when, sail set, boat shoved off, we realized we were heading in the wrong direction, heading, in fact, for low Wroxham Bridge.

To appreciate what sailing on the Broads means you must have some picture in your mind of the Broads, for you have

never seen their like. The chief rivers are the Bure, the Yare and the Waveney, all three meeting in Breyden Water at Great Yarmouth. The ideal way of "doing" the Broads would be to spend one summer on the Bure, with its tributaries, the Ant and the Thurne, and the Broads spreading their shallow waters in this region—Wroxham Broad, Salhouse, Ranworth, Barton, Hickling, and Horsey Mere, to mention the larger. The next summer one could play along the Yare, the next the Waveney. Personally I should be willing to spend all three summers on our Bure, Ant, and Thurne.

The Bure is the "Queen of the Broads Rivers," and so deep and broad, spacious and commodious, one grows to feel reckless and abandoned on her meandering curves. In other words, you really can tack on the Bure, boats can pass one another without prayers, oaths, or splinters. Actually we sailed up the Bure the last day four yachts abreast. You can moor for the night any place along its wooded upper banks and need neither winds, tide nor gallant rescuers to get you off.

For the most part Broads rivers are extremely narrow, as rivers go, extremely shallow, extremely winding, the dykes of Holland coming nearest to their general looks and behavior. The lower reaches are bereft of trees, the country absolutely flat, and then one tastes the full broads flavor: a rotting brick windmill here and there against the sky, cows posing consciously it would seem, so well done the grouping, a church steeple rising from some distant clump of green, and wherever the eye wanders, sails. Sails headed in every possible and seemingly abandoned direction, white sails moving against blue sky on, apparently, green fenland. No boat is to be seen. There may be sails on the Ant, sails on the Thurne, sails on the Bure itself—you can see no river but your own; you can see every sail weaving in and out on some stately meadow minuet.

Do you begin to catch some of the originality of sailing on the Broads? Not so many years ago not a sail-boat had ever been seen in those parts. I can think of no rivers of ours approaching those of Broadland in narrowness, in windiness,

in shallowness, which would have anything on them but canoes or small motor-boats. On the narrow winding shallow rivers of Norfolk, staid, broad, dignified wherries with their great black sails have been freighting these decades on end. Now a few still ply on business bent, but most of them have been turned into floating summer "palaces" (according to folk of simple tastes) and two families together can spend a week or a month in the efficient hands of local captain and cook, sailing majestically over inland Norfolk. Like the lorry of the road, small craft do well to give them wide berth.

There are house-boats galore along the rivers and on the Broads; there are motor-boats ranging all the way from crested and polished mahogany, a brass-buttoned skipper, cut flowers on the table and a crew to look after ten comfortably-quartered gentry, to some sputtery asthmatic home-assembled ark just holding two afloat, plus gramophone, for the season. There are hundreds of motor-boats, hundreds and hundreds of people swarm in on and over them.

There are yachts past all counting, or what my land-lubbery intellect would call merely sail-boats—aristocratic craft which cut by, lorgnette to supercilious eyes, as it were, and a crew to do the work; cutter-rigged yachts with portable baths and pianos; nondescript boats with sails, disintegrating before one's eyes under the inspirational handling of four to six boys each, each boy pulling on a rope some other boy has hold of, or else half of them bailing, or all of them calling for help to get off the mud.

There are row-boats lurking around sheltered bends, bearing from one peaceful bachelor to six in a family, who sit tied to a tree all day, or some reeds, or a cow stake, and fish.

Are you thinking by now that one might as well cruise, as far as peace and a real vacation goes, along New York's East River? Ah, you don't yet know the Broads! Remember, there are two hundred miles of navigable waterways, and it would take far more boats than Norfolk boasts to crowd two hundred miles. But there is my caution to bear in mind: every

year sees more enthusiastic cruisers on the Broads, every year sees water weeds and reeds encroaching their choking roots into Broadland waterways. Only a few years ago there were Broads to sail on which in 1930 could scarcely be distinguished from the surrounding land, and now that the day of the freight wherry is passing, stretches of river become annually less navigable. The wherries plying all year long kept every waterway of any size open.

I KNOW now that the loveliest stretch of the Bure, and the Bure is the loveliest of Norfolk rivers, is from Wroxham Bridge to Aylsham, eighteen miles up-stream. But we were not headed up-stream at Wroxham for that reason, but because we were headed up-stream when the youth untied the boat. The breeze, being in the direction to blow us up-stream, was fortunately very light, otherwise we'd have kept on until we crashed into Wroxham Bridge. As it was, by experimenting with the tiller and doing no more than graze against other people's dinghies, halt a few motor-boats in mid-stream, and give other yachts experience in sudden tacking, we somehow found ourselves headed toward the twenty-seven-mile-distant sea.

It was fairly late in the afternoon by then, the wind was not in our line, the river was getting pretty crowded with yachts returning to Wroxham to "give up craft punctually at hour fixed." All cautious souls near their hiring yard Friday evening to be sure they aren't becalmed miles distant when it comes Saturday morning, and the zero hour for the return of most boats on the Broads. All in all, when we approached a stretch of wooded banks, we decided to give up the ghost and moor. The relief of that decision! Yet we were immediately overwhelmed by a fresh problem. How moor? We ran into the bank, June swooped at some trees, we leapt on shore, each clutching an anchor tied to a rope, each advanced into the marshy woods until the rope was taut and then strategically draped her anchor in a tree.

In a way our sailing experience was happily simple. All of us sailors know, for instance, that a yacht is never to land on the lee shore; that in sailing to windward the boat on the port tack must give way to that on the starboard tack—rudimentary rules of the road such as these become second nature to the mariner, and simplify water traffic. But we weren't afloat long enough to learn definitely which was leeward and which windward, which port and which starboard, and since we couldn't be sure, we left all decisions to others and merely kept inoffensively on our way. I was a little perturbed the first time that a man whom we almost decapitated in a passing sail-boat on one of the narrower rivers called "Pull in your boom!" and I had no idea what the boom was, but we both came to know several nautical terms like that before the week was over. In fact once or twice we called "Pull in your boom!" to some one else.

It is quite amazing, besides all you don't learn by the end of a week on a boat, all you do. When I think back now upon that first mooring, and the fashion in which we lowered sail and how we looped the canvas over the boom once we extricated ourselves from under, and how we decided we wouldn't do anything with the awning at all, because we couldn't for the lives of us make out where to begin with what,—when I think of the mess we were in that night, and the immaculate ship-shapeness of us during the moorings to come, every gadget looking as if we'd sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in our day, I realize that there was room for improvement, and that we improved. But that first night, just to be done with the business of moving along a river, just to have learned, by eyeing like hawks such craft as moored near enough for observation, how to set the boom in the crutch and how to lift the top of the cabin, made us feel like a couple of Liptons. After two hours' effort we got the Primus stove to warm up some cocoa and opened a variety of canned goods which we ate cold; then we sat back and watched the boats of all sizes and descriptions heading up and down stream, listened to a victrola and the laughter on the

boats moored near, and loved the world. Meanwhile we sewed lustily, hectically, on two pairs of "beach pyjamas" to be properly garbed for the Broads when came the dawn. Somehow by then we felt reasonably confident of living until dawn.

With the dawn came a downpour, whereupon we were forced to do something with the awning, and do it in a hurry. We slung it over the boom and crept under. Everything leaked, but we labored in contentment over the Primus and in a few hours had some coffee. What is time on the Broads? At last the rain stopped, and once more the awful decision had to be made; we couldn't spend the week moored a few yards from Wroxham. Can no one appreciate the heroism involved in that resolution to cast off?

Nor, because the craft nearby which had served as models must have departed during the rain and we non-observant, could we fathom whether one hoisted sail and then cast off, or cast off and then hoisted sail. Intuitively we decided upon the latter, which meant we found ourselves floundering helplessly in mid-stream, each pulling frantically on ropes which belonged to the jib sail left behind, or were merely fastened to a ring on the boat, or at last belonged to the main sail, only it did not seem to want to go up. Finally, with superhuman efforts, we got the sail fairly handsome—and then immediately blew back into the trees and stuck.

Whereupon, again because of hawklike observations of others, we had our first experience in quanting. Reader, pause to tell yourself you don't yet know what work is. A quant is a pole about twenty feet long which weighs—I am constrained to say a ton, and quanting, as some philosopher has written, is a science. There are three activities connected with a quant,—either you use it for tacking, to fend yourself off the approaching bank, or you propel the boat with it when there is no wind, or it rolls overboard.

Some one once wrote a vivid account of quanting, which appeared a few years ago in Punch. "Crew Apple's" description of tacking on a Broads' river ran to the effect that you jump

aboard on one bank, some one holding the stern anchor cable while crew and captain hoist sails. When the cable can be held no longer, the third party lets go, whereupon the yacht charges across the river at tremendous speed. Arrived at the other side (which, bear in mind, may be about forty to fifty feet) "Crew Apple" pushes the bow out of the mud with the quant, and they charge back to the other bank, the crew ready with the quant if he has not been hurled ashore by impact, and the bow is pushed around again. In this manner they thrash back and forth thirty times and then discover, just as they think they must be about to reach the next village, that the fresh water jug has been left behind. On the next tack, whoever has suddenly landed from the bow walks back—a distance of fifteen yards, and gets it.

As for long propelling, one sticks the sharp end of the quant in the mud, first having extricated its twenty feet of weight from various ropes, and then bracing the duller end against the stomach, walks from bow to stern along the narrow and usually slippery deck. At the stern one of four things can happen. Either one becomes interested in some passing craft and walks on overboard, or the point of the quant has become much more solidly encased in mud than seemed possible, so that instead of yielding to a forceful jerk it stays in and pulls the quant after it; or the last moment the quant lets go; or it does come out just in the nick of time and one drags it up to the bow again, to repeat. It is to avoid the possibility of four steady hours of this process that most motorless yachts prefer to reach the proximity of their hiring yards the night before "turning in" hour.

I once heard of a quant being used by an agile young man as a means to pole-vault across a narrow dyke. However, when the quant attained an upright position it sank too deep into the mud to proceed further. The young man thus suspended in mid-air called somewhat despairingly: "What do I do now?" The quant settled the problem for him by conveniently break-

ing in two, depositing the young man with a large splash in the water.

So, that Saturday morning out came our quant, since the wind would do nothing constructive for us. If quanting is a science, like most, it is not learned all at once. We lost the quant overboard, and rescued it at the risk of our lives. We lost the mop overboard, trying to rescue the quant, and rescued the mop at the risk of our lives. We lost the crutch for the boom overboard trying to rescue the mop, and that too, quite expert by now, we recovered. The boat, and everything on it, was plainly being disagreeable. I should never have brought my child on such a trip. There was a clammy sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach and I was *sick* of trying to do things I knew nothing about. All we needed was another downpour.

At that moment we saw a boat turn off the Bure at right angles, quanted with deliberation so it must be on a waterway. We quanted furiously and turned off at the same reedy woody dyke—to find ourselves on Wroxham Broad.

There occurred then and there one of those queer psychological tricks—suddenly my old sailing feel and knowledge came back to me (not, oh dear, that it was ever colossal) and away we tore. Back and forth, back and forth across that Queen of the Broads, a mile long, three hundred yards wide, reed and tree lined or bounded by soft green rolling meadows, peaceful, still, we tacked. When I could have come about with my eyes closed I gave June a turn—and she all but lost her mind for joy. The breeze was brisk, we sped along, one other boat only sailing that perfect Broad. “I’ve never had *so* much fun in my life!” announced June, one hand on the tiller, the other clutching the proper rope.

Yet we couldn’t spend our lives sailing Wroxham Broad. We watched a sail apparently cutting through trees and reeds at the other end from where we came in, so out that reed-and-tree-hidden dyke we steered ourselves, and with the breeze behind us down the Bure we sailed, heaven of heavens, “run-

ning before the wind." "I can't describe our joy and enthusiasm," announces the diary.

That afternoon we moored in a perfect bend, tree-lined, not a boat near us—and did we get the awning fixed in style?

The next day, Sunday, was from beginning to end an experience to gloat over forever. A gale had come up in the night and I spent my allotted time, naturally, wondering if our moorings would hold, and where we'd blow to if we blew, and decided each time we couldn't blow farther than the bridge at Wroxham or, below, the bridge at Accle, or the opposite bank not many feet away. By morning, and our need of it, the gale turned into a perfect breeze, and off we sped in just the direction we wanted to speed, past, at intervals, lovely Norfolk homes gardened to the river, green meadows, windmills. We greeted Horning, gay picturesque village, with a fuss and movement of craft and people, a business of riverside inns. Once past the ruined abbey of St. Benet, founded by King Canute, we turned at right angles up the Thurne.

Breezing gaily up the Thurne some ray of infinitesimal intelligence began to work in my brain. In one of the numerous gardened bungalows dotting the Thurne in that flat fenland, a man was pottering among his flowers. "Is there a bridge on this river?" I called.

"Just ahead," he called back.

And we had forgotten all about learning how to lower a mast.

Around the bend the ancient bridge of Potter Heigham spanned the Thurne with an opening under its mediæval stone arch which appeared about the right size for a canoe. Utterly bewildered by such a problem, all my stage fright back again, I once more swallowed my pride. We sidled abjectly along a moored yacht built perhaps to sleep three, and with six boys swarming over her.

"Do you know anything about lowering a mast?" we asked humbly.

Immediately all six dashed to our rescue, lowered our sail,

lowered our mast, quanted us under the bridge, raised our mast, hoisted our sail and we were off in state, with much American gratitude waved gallantly aside by many English farewells. There is a camaraderie to the Broads one is not prepared for in England, though at that many a cruiser passes by without a word. Which still, on the main waterways, leaves a number to give a cheery call; and at bridges a spirit of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table prevails. However, we were the only unmanned boat we saw all seven days, so gallants aren't overworked by helpless ladies.

Now the Thurne alone with its Broads would justify an entire summer, Potter Heigham (Hayham they call it in these parts—no matter) Bridge as metropolitan centre for the purchase of fresh supplies—three stores and an inn. The Thurne is roomy and deep as Norfolk rivers come with fine sailing to be had, and once the bungalows near Potter are passed, one is alone with the sky and the fens, a dilapidated windmill now and then, and just enough fellow cruisers for a holiday feel; at times, which is still better, no one at all. As to its Broads—Heigham Sounds, Hickling and Horsey Mere (Martham we hadn't time for, alas) give you the unique Broads' atmosphere in full, their like not to be found in any other corner of England. Turn up Kendal Dyke, and when Heigham Sound opens out, a mile in length, reed-lined, with its wide, wild marshes stretching away, "secrets of the early world seem to be whispered among its reeds." Peace . . . stillness . . . a coot disturbed, to settle again . . . fish feeding near the trembling rushes . . . white sails against blue sky. . . . Once Broadland boasted many such a fenland "mere"—a map of 1797 shows a Broad as large as Oulton on the Waveney near Potter. Not a sign of it remains.

A narrower reed-lined channel leads from Heigham Sound to Hickling Broad, largest of them all and shallowest, no doubt. For the most part it has a depth of about three feet, there being one legend of a man sailing on Hickling who refused to leave his boat for an hour lest some one steal a bucket of water

from the Broad and he thus find himself stranded. But what an expanse to sail on, if the breeze be anything at all, as it was that Sunday! From the entrance of Heigham Sound to the Pleasure Boat Inn, the farthest end of Hickling is three miles, three miles of easy dancing before the wind, keeping, however, within the stake-marked channel. Never a sound in that sunny peacefulness of water, reed-edged, of flat fenland rolling to blue-cupped, sail-dotted sky.

Old Meadow Dyke—there's a sail! Its mile and a half of tortuous, very narrow turnings leading out of Heigham Sound to Horsey Mere daunt most yachtsmen, so that only a rare few of marked sailing ability like ourselves seem to find their way up it. Had we not just viewed a map at the Pleasure Boat Inn we might have concluded after a few crazy turns that we were merely going round in circles. One minute the breeze was port, next starboard (terms used loosely), then head on followed by a brisk dash before the wind. Not, of course, that the direction of its blowing altered in the least.

A month earlier the narrow banks of Old Meadow Dyke would have been a mass of waist-high wild flowers, hiding from view either side the flat marsh stretches, the marshmen swaying their scythes in the hot sun, and the fragrance of meadow-sweet is thick on the air. This August Sunday there were the waterside reeds, now and then blackberries, the water weeds in the clear dyke, but not a human being, not a sail even to be seen, except away on Hickling and the Sounds. I would we could have seen the Broads when the wild yellow iris were in bloom!

And then, suddenly, Horsey Mere opens out, one of the loveliest, wildest, most remote of the Broads, and the heart is utterly content. We found it at sunset, circular, reed-fringed, woodland in one direction, a line of sand-dunes off to the far right where only a mile and a half distant the sea rolls in and out. In almost the centre of the Mere one small green island plays with the wild fowl. Here on Horsey Mere we would have moored, but here on Horsey Mere was a sign stating that no

mooring was allowed. So we sailed Horsey Mere along with one agile boat flaunting an orange sail. At the farther end of the Broad the breeze vanished from the earth.

Horsey Mere was too deep to quant. We sat and used our imaginations. Some activity of nature too mild to be sensed by human limitations moved us inch by inch, inch by inch, back in the late summer dusk to Old Meadow Dyke. Once at the Dyke out came the quant. I remembered passing a small clump of dwarfed willow trees, and by these trees we would moor. And by them we moored, in the stillest evening I have ever known in all my life, under a cloudless Norfolk sky. We cooked our supper, we adjusted the awning, we dispatched the world's thickest cloud of mosquitoes with a generous sprinkling of Flit, and turned into our bunks. The night was literally soundless—not an insect, not a reed whispering against another, not even, this night, the boom of the distant sea.

Nor was there a breath of wind the next morning, that still beginning of such a gay day. So again we quanted (my quite honest diary says: "we both love quanting, so take turns!") Around a bend we came upon two youths in a cabinless boat—they had gotten becalmed the night before and had failed to reach their destination. Their boat was very light and since now and then enough of a puff of wind to affect their sail did blow from some place, they insisted upon towing us. Every time we got the rope adjusted the wind died down, whereupon being gallant beyond measure, they insisted upon rowing and towing us even so. One young man was Italian with no word of English at his command, the other was quarter English and spoke the language faultlessly. By the time the two boats reached Heigham Sound, and then, still almost breezeless, Kendall Dyke, and at last the Thurne, we had had hours of laughing together. At the Thurne they were to turn north, after eating a most elaborate-looking handsomely wrapped picnic lunch which they insisted we share with them. Mindful of how they had rowed in our behalf, we considered all the nourishment they

could come by their just due. With many and long-waved farewells we turned south to Potter.

The bridge! When we had gone under the bridge the day before, six boys swarming our decks had left us no single opportunity to observe how one really lowered a mast, how got it up again. This time we would moor and practise until we learned the trick. Hardly had we made the first confused gesture when stalwart well-bred English voices were heard. "Caaan't we help you?" The Four Musketeers had arrived in our lives.

That afternoon, not far from where the Thurne joins the Bure, June and I moored to have tea. One gets like that in England. All the Broads moor for tea. Scarcely had we begun the brewing process when the snout of a familiar small dog appeared on the bank. The Four Musketeers. We insisted they have tea with us, after all their help of the early afternoon. From their boat they produced a gramophone and we had our first Broads party. There couldn't be four nicer boys in England; Jeff was hardly a boy, being home on a visit from his job in Australia; Paul was from Derbyshire—Paul and I still correspond; B—— shy and unshaven, shy because unshaven?; Jim with a line of conversation to delight the ears. Anything he disliked, from certain American film stars to soggy crackers, "put years on him," or "grew a beard on him." All four were graduated from the same public school.

That night they invited June and me to a Broads dance. This was their third summer on the Broads, nor had they begun to exhaust Norfolk possibilities. Next summer they were coming again, of course. But no one knew the Broads who hadn't attended a Broads dance. It seems several nights a week there is a Broads dance—at Potter, at Ludham, at Horning, at Caister . . . and the knowing assemble, all in yachting costume, and a weird mixture that is, plus the dancing enthusiasts of the nearby local marsh population. This night the dance was at Ludham. The *Mada* being too thoroughly to my liking to leave for so much as an hour, I let June go land dancing



ELY
CATHEDRAL



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ACRE



TOMB OF
DUCHESS OF
SUFFOLK,
EWELME



THE BACKS,
CAMBRIDGE

alone with the four cavaliers. They returned after midnight minus voices; the four young men because all the male folks make as much noise as they can at a Broads dance, June because all the girls have to talk above the noise the male folks make. Hoarse invitations were issued to two more dances that week. The wind has much to do with who appears!

The next morning no sooner was breakfast tidied away than the Four Musketeers appeared from their rented Potter bungalow up river. It was they hoisted our sail in a right stiff breeze; it was two of them jumped back the last minute into our boat, and with two in their own the six of us whisked away the fastest yet up the Bure to the Ant, up the Ant to Ludham Bridge. Mast down and up again (were we never to learn the process?) we fairly churned the winding river with our speed, although dragging June and Paul happily spluttering on ropes astern, slowed us up a bit. Banks meadow-lined, banks tree-lined; Orstead, with its small stone church doing Broadland duty to God among its sheltering branches these five hundred years . . . and at last all the charm of Barton Broad opened out before us.

There is another Broad for you and one of the loveliest in the land, a mile and a quarter long, about half a mile wide, its banks reed-lined, green low-wooded hills to the east and north, dots of wooded islands, Barton church steeple rising through the trees—but mariner, shoal 'ware shoal, and stick to the posts which mark the channel!

Lunch on the bank near Stalham staithe, crackers, cheese, and a bottle of Sandeman's Port supplied by the cavaliers, a mixture of soup, salad, jam, and bananas by Parkers who hadn't provisioned with the thought of entertaining in view. That night, boys back to Potter far away, we to moor in a small cove of our own beside thick trees on Stalham Dyke, again not another boat within sight or sound.

If the world could but have seen where we moored on the Ant the next late afternoon, willow trees sheltering the *Mada*, through their grey-green branches a setting sun and a gold

new moon! Not a breath of wind was stirring—across the river trees, meadow, Hunsett windmill, sleepy horses were reflected as in a mirror. Over all the earth to see there was a stillness, a soft haze to a distant stone farmhouse, to yellow hay, to windmill, to water, and our *Mada* in the midst of it all, and we so happy. What an inspiration had the Broads trip been—a slice of heaven on earth!

That morning after sailing with the most leisurely of breezes along Stalham Dyke to the Ant, we had found a brisker blowing which gave us a perfect sail up the Ant, in its smaller almost deserted way the loveliest river of all. We passed scarcely a boat, only the sun and peace and Norfolk loveliness about us. At Watford Bridge—a mark after Watford Bridge—we took down our own mast, blah Englishmen in bathing-suits and felt hats dashing to our rescue when all was done. Only to be told at the “Pub” where I journeyed for fresh water that a boat our size couldn’t possibly navigate beyond the bridge. Up went the mast again, unaided, unaided—it *is* a job!—and down the narrow stream we tacked, back and forth, back and forth, until our hands felt raw.

The next day, nor could we bear the thought that it was our next-to-the-last day, the breezeless Broads, the motorless Broads, when not swimming, took heftily to quanting. Later, when we read a newspaper again, we learned that it was the hottest day of the year to date. To us it was merely “hot grand sun.” We quanted, we swam, we stretched out on deck and rested, then took to quanting again. Now and then a bend in the Ant brought a whiff of breeze we could use—the bliss of that! Breeze exhausted, the Broads world took gaily, sometimes competitively, to quanting again. Motor-boats became repulsive. Our pace was such that from time to time we indulged in luscious ripe blackberries along the banks, lost on motor-boats. That night we moored just below Ludham Bridge, again mast down and up unaided! Round about there was a soft sunset haze over the flat fenlands, the low new moon showing through copper-gold. Our last night, earth entirely perfect.

The last day of all was so hot, so calm, we didn't even hoist sail until we had quanted all the way to the Bure. At the Bure—a breeze! Only those who have been quanting in the hot sun really know what spells Paradise. Glad miles up the Bure we sailed, boom out as far as it would go (and there's undoubtedly some fine nautical expression for that). Says the diary: "It was a day in a thousand!" Said the government weather report, previously referred to: "Hottest day of the year, Aug. 29th." We turned up the dyke to lovely Ranworth Broad, woodsy, the village across from the dyke, the church around a bend "looking like some great grey bird rising from a nest of trees." There is a famous pointed rood screen in Ranworth church. Nothing could have gotten us off our boat.

It was after reaching the Bure again that we sailed four yachts abreast towards Wroxham, now one boat losing on a curve, now a gust off-shore giving a yacht an extra puff ahead. We should, of course, have sailed proudly four before the wind to Wroxham. The wind wasn't in the least interested. All four of us quanted into Wroxham. When we passed the spot where we had moored that first night one week ago our hearts ached a little for the soft-handed, pale, ignorant two who had made such a mess of their early nautical lives. Two ancient mariners, weather-beaten, calloused, miles of quanting, miles and miles of sailing behind them, possessed of a magical way with a Primus stove, and a boat at evening sitting as pretty as anybody's on the Broads—thus we brought the *Mada* alongside Wroxham staithe, after seven days of what was to us, after five thousand glorious miles of England, Wales and Scotland, even so the richest experience of a beyond words rich summer.

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CHAPTER 25

ELY AND AN ENGLISH TEA; CAMBRIDGE AND OXFORD AND ANOTHER ENGLISH TEA; EWELME AND THE THAMES; WEARY WINDSOR AND A LAST NIGHT OF SUMMER ALMOST ROOFLESS IN A THUNDERSTORM; EXTRAVAGANCE, AND ETON, AND THE END



FROM Wroxham to Norwich, from Norwich over East Dereham where Borrow was born, we drove to Castle Acres, with sights there to behold of castle earthworks, of ancient church, of ruined abbey, of hoary barbican. Not far away, at last and for sure, we came upon the Peddar's Way. Indeed we had to drive along some modernized miles of it before we found a stretch of the Peddar's Way one could dream over, and there we dreamt. . . .

In Thetford we had tea at the Bell Inn, with an exclamation of joy at the sight of the Elizabethan courtyard, of despair at the atrociously modernized interior. The most important "castle mound" in the country, a hundred feet high, a thousand round, once supported an early Norman timber manor house in the days before there was time or opportunity to build the stone castle with its massive square keep. Over attractive Mil-denhall with its church possessed of a carved angel roof, and never did we miss that delight to our souls if we could guess one might be near—to Ely.

"Ely is a dull little town." Why does everyone say Ely is

a dull little town? It isn't, not on a Saturday night anyway. To us it seemed to possess many a fascinating corner, and to wander its byways at dusk is a rare and happy experience. The town square was anything but dull, what with the Salvation Army trying its loudest to draw an audience, in competition with an ex-soldier playing his "egg-box organ," to the wonder and amazement of an enthralled crowd from near and far—as far as California, for that matter. The commotion of people bundle-laden, waiting for buses to take them home after Saturday's marketing, of parents collecting offspring, of shopkeepers closing for the night and Sunday, of crowds queuing up for the movies, of cars honking. . . . Ely is a dull little town!

And over all, the majestic imperturbable cathedral. To look up in the dusk at the cathedral West Tower and the south-west transept from the sloping lawns of the cathedral park—there is a picture distinct from every other cathedral you have ever seen, as will ever be the utter perfection of Ely's central octagonal tower. As to the interior, alas my diary is a shamed confession: "I've seen so many naves and transepts and arches and clerestories this summer that my head is one colossal muddle. Will I ever get them straightened out? . . . The outside of Ely will always be mine, inside—it is already dim, except the glorious central tower, the roof, some few further details."

There follows one of the happiest memories of any cathedral town. The evening before I had stopped at a stationery store to ask directions to some inexpensive hotel. The kindest of men insisted upon coming out on the sidewalk a ways to give more explicit directions. Suddenly it had dawned on me that the next day would be Sunday and how could I buy the necessary post-cards of Ely?

"You ring the doorbell of my home," said this delightful person, "and I'll open the shop for you."

So, across to Mr. Tyndal's of the stationery shop. That charming man—I can see *him* clearly enough! He greeted me like an old friend, we entered the dark shop where June later

joined us. After buying cards he asked us if we'd like to take a look at his 200-year-old house. We met his dear wife, and ended in accepting their most cordial invitation to stay for tea! It was so delightful, and the first home we had entered in three months. I must remember his title, for he is a man of parts—Apparitor General of the Bishop's Consistory of Ely—there! One splendid son in uniform, his picture in every room. My heart sank when I looked at his handsome face for I knew what would be said: "One of those who didn't come back"—that was all. It was such agony to me I wanted to weep then and there. Those two brave people, grey-haired, so eager and interested in life, living it so richly in a small English town, apparently meaning so much to each other. I felt humble and grateful to think the experience of meeting them had been so unexpectedly granted us, always to treasure. We did love our tea in the low-ceilinged room of so much taste, of such evident real culture. Nothing must do but Mr. Tyndal showed us some rare old manuscripts, deeds, etc., just sent him to pass judgment upon—he is one of the authorities on Ely Cathedral. They had been accidentally discovered in an old box of a small county church. One was dated 1358! It was a fine thrill for us. We hated to say goodbye. Wasn't it all our luck? "A darling soul with bright red cheeks and blue eyes," June describes Mr. Tyndal.

Ely is a dull little town indeed!

OF OUR days in Cambridge and Oxford I shall tell nothing—the very idea of giving any conception of what those two cities meant to us, Cambridge especially, in a short space, brings despair in its wake. If a person on a first visit to England had but very limited time, I should say, see London and Cambridge, and let the rest wait until the next trip. There are those who would say London and Oxford. I repeat London and Cambridge! It hurts, it hurts, not to tell of King's College Chapel and Magdalene and the Backs and Queens and the gardens

and the sun on Cambridge and a full moon on Cambridge. . . . I would stay years in Cambridge! And the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Christ Church and New College, and the new Rhodes House, and the view from the top of Cheldonian . . . and running into the Meikeljohns!

I shall take time to remark that Grantchester, near Cambridge, is a delightful spot in which to rest weary sightseeing eyes and bones. Especially is The Orchard a place for tea. There was something of serenity (except for the wasps) in having tea in deep grass under laden apple trees, after the cruelly ugly tea interiors we had been beholding of late. Verily, God does some things better than Englishmen. (But why create wasps?)

Yet Englishmen had done very fine things at Hatfield—a Tudor manor house, Hatfield Hall, an old Elizabethan building near the Gate House where the Queen of England had once held the Queen of Scotland prisoner, built of red bricks with leaded glass windows, and—God steps into the picture again—great trees and the most beautiful riot of a garden we had seen in all England. I crept into the little church and loved it in the early evening. The big west window, instead of being colored, was made of plain clear glass, and as I stood looking at the dignified green trees and the pink sunset light showing through, I thought again how much better God can do things. Yet I have seen colored glass which outdid God!

That night we slept in St. Albans, with a cathedral to see next morning which was to me, the Norman part of it, a stirring satisfaction, especially the great transepts. More color was still clinging to the interior of St. Albans, nor was it as cluttered as other cathedrals.

In the attractive village of Wendover—within easy commuting distance of London, we were now—we had our second and last sight of English home life, when we had tea with the Dursts, charming people we had met at Tal-y-Llyn Lake in Wales. An old Georgian home and garden, and tea in the garden, the sort of English garden to set your heart dancing.

We took what look we could at Chequers on our way to

Oxford. It is a home and a countryside which would very much influence me to accept the premiership of England. . . . After Oxford we investigated two fascinating corners of England—Dorchester, once of importance to Rome, then to the Saxons, now a dot of a village with a remarkable old Abbey Church and quaint old houses and tea at the White Hart, which was never built yesterday. As to wee Ewelme—without the Dursts to tell us we might never have heard of Ewelme. To have missed Ewelme! That spot won us with its ancient school, its cloistered almshouse, and what a church! The old sexton was leaving, so late it was, but he came back and unlocked the door for us. He was such a dear himself and explained everything with such care and enthusiasm that we loved the church all the more, especially its Spanish cypress and oak roofs and the tomb of the Duchess of Suffolk—to us the most beautiful tomb we saw all summer, with much of the warm coloring still left on the marble. The whole church was a delight.

Came Saturday, the last full day of our summer—the next day would find us, barring crashing limousines, in London. Over five thousand miles of going, almost three months on the road, and yet the thought of only one day left seemed more than we could bear. Certainly it argued well for the summer that we both agreed we would gladly, gratefully start out then and there and do the whole five thousand miles over again! Instead, for the last day, we did that famed stretch of the Thames from Henley to Maidenhead by boat. Though the Thames has a loveliness the Broads lack, yet we had to admit we loved the Broads more. By train back to Henley and the car—a blight to our Austin spirits was that train trip. . . .

Windsor . . . and that was the kind of sightseeing to wear your hair right off your head. Such a weariness, and castles of size and wholeness can be so oppressive when you think of modern human beings inhabiting them. Such mobs at Windsor! England certainly does take to the haunts of her royal family. It seemed as if history might change dynasties on us before ever our place in the queue moved up into the state chambers.

Afterwards we dragged our almost broken legs to the Queen's Dolls House. That was a joy for the whole or half dead. Take every child to the Queen's Dolls House—and then finally the child will have to drag parents away. Two massive Germans next me, men at least fifty years old, may be exclaiming, "*Aber entzückend!*" there yet. "Mummie, look!" squeals young England. "Wait now, I'm not done on this side!" answers enthralled English parenthood. . . . We staggered back to the car. "Sight-seeing" can be close to a nightmare.

The last night of summer—we would spend it in an old inn where "the ceilings would be low as are the ceilings of Heaven," where the rafters would be smoked, in a village of timbered houses and crooked byways. That was all we asked for our last night! Had we planned to sleep under a tree in the greenest and loveliest land the heart could ask for, beside a river, or on a rolling hill—what a choice was ours for less than the asking! We drove as far as Sonning-on-the-Thames, a village to delight the soul. There was the White Hart Hotel with its gay and appealing garden. . . . Ah me, too costly for Parkers—twelve shillings for bed and breakfast. Up and down the Thames we wandered, right and left of the Thames we explored—it was a Saturday evening, we were close to London, and everything at all attractive was full. Finally, when we had reached the point where almost any bed would be gratefully received, we rounded the bend of a road into Bray.

Ah Bray. Charming, lovely, desirable Bray. And such an Inn—the Inn of our dreams. . . . The general style of the cars standing without was a trifle uneasing, the waiter of whom I asked, even so unsuspiciously, the price of bed and breakfast, did, I afterwards ruminated, look over-resplendent for our needs. "If this costs twelve shillings, we'll stay anyhow!" I say, as now and then the reckless will make unlicensed speech. The waiter returns. Room and breakfast thirty shillings (\$6.00) for one. In three months of travel we had forgotten how to count that far without using our fingers. The only thing to cost anything like thirty shillings in three months had been

putting our stoven Austin in trim again, which was many more shillings than thirty, but not one shilling to us. Thirty shillings!

Never could we have made a thousand dollars cover the cost of a new car for three months and absolutely all expenses for two people and car, had we paid out thirty shillings many nights for bed and breakfast.

Would you believe it, every place we were able to dig up in Bray which we could have afforded, was filled with the waiters from the thirty shillings inn! Naturally you couldn't waste potential thirty shillings rooms on waiters.

It grew dark. It grew darker. Suddenly there came a crash of thunder, and then a deluge—the same sort of farewell we were getting as England had sent to wish us God-speed three months before. Must we ride to London before we could find shelter? . . . A gateway . . . hotel sign faintly discernible in the storm and dark . . . reverse . . . dress-suits . . . décolleté . . . Eleven and six a night. "But heck," says the diary, "we're thanking God for a roof over our heads this last and thundery night. We don't mind ending thus in a costly blaze of glory." That afternoon had seen a right fancy wedding at our Bray Head Hotel, and I, if you please, inhabited the room the groom-to-be had slept his last single night in, June the best man's. Confetti still adhered to both carpets.

It only remained to do the short stretch to London, with the sun blessing our—can one say "swan" miles? We stopped en route at Eton where the great of England have been birched in their time, and the great of England-to-come are being birched today. What glamor to Eton! And what dignity in mellow red brick, in quadrangles, in archways, what strange and mixed associations to the fifteen thousand names and more carved all over ancient panels.

The long dismal trafficked miles to London, so much longer miles than Sussex knows, or Nottinghamshire, Cornwall or Wales. London. . . Oh, there was a gay full week in London! But London meant to me a farewell from that little maroon-colored car in a big unfeeling garage—a pat, a stroke. . .

Who bought that car in which just to sit with my hands on the steering wheel meant Paradise to me?

Madame Tussaud's wax exhibition resigned June to the new and Austinless life. "I had no idea what it was all about, and I again repeat that nothing is nicer than a surprise. The place was super-perfect."

A few pages back in her diary, writing about Cambridge (she wasn't at all sure she wanted me to see her diary of the summer, but finally granted permission) I came upon a sentence which gave me long pause. I feel perhaps travel books ought not to be written. I can see where I was certainly not always a wise companion for my own daughter this summer.

"... Then to Trinity College Backs, which is the most beautiful of all, those enormous willows bending down to the sluggish Cam, and glimpses of mediæval buildings between—what a gorgeous surprise to come upon! I had never heard of the Backs, and now they are one of the experiences of my life. If only more things in this world could be kept secret what a number of delightful surprises we would find every day!"

I, who have felt no sight "which I had a mighty mind to see" was fully relished until it had been shared with some one, who have longed to write so that those who had already beheld what I found so rewarding could re-live their own delight, and those who had not yet beheld would somehow find ways and means to journey—if only indeed in the imagination! ... Have I instead been guilty of an unkindness to those who may find themselves actually about to experience the ecstasy of the British Isles?

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF MORE OR LESS PRACTICAL INFORMATION TO DO WITH THIS AND THAT



I. MOTORING IN GREAT BRITAIN

THERE is no question but that motoring in Great Britain is so far superior to depending on the railway that any additional financial outlay should be budgeted under "Necessities." Save on something else!

One can buy a second-hand car at the port of entry or London; one can buy a new car—either possible on a guaranteed repurchase system. For a three months' sojourn one or the other is advisable. Less than three months means it is wiser to rent a car by the week or month. For longer than three months, or even for three months, it may be desirable to take your own car. The return transportation on a car weighing from two to three thousand pounds is around \$250; the "International Privileges" rate, including custom registration, Tourist Membership in the American Automobile Association, international customs pass, international driving license, car registration, and international number plates, means \$50 additional (this does not include insurance, which on a small Austin, for instance, comes to \$25). The cost of our new Austin Seven for three months, which included an additional quarterly registration fee of \$11, unnecessary if one started on or after July 1st and returned before September 30th, was \$271. The ex-

pense of shipping a car across the Channel (via the Southern Railway) to Calais, Folkestone or Boulogne is about \$10.

It is well to bear in mind, considering the narrowness of many English roads and the width of char-a-bancs, that, generally speaking, the smaller the car the more enjoyable the driving. Also where funds are not unlimited, remember with gas in England costing from thirty-five to forty cents an English gallon that a small car does forty miles to the gallon. Also ferry and bridge tolls, and the nightly garage bill, increase with the size of the car. (Our Austin cost from twenty-five to thirty-five cents a night.) Also, with left-of-the-road driving, an English car with right-hand drive may be safer and more comfortable.

By all means, no matter what you may think you want to do about a car in England, first consult the American Automobile Association, or safer still, the Automobile Association, Farnham House, 66 Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.2, or the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall. Before starting out join one or both of the latter. Associate membership, good for the summer, costs a guinea (\$5.25). Such returns for that small fee!—

For instance, expert suggestions and advice as to transporting, renting, or buying a car. If you decide to take your own car, all details can be handled.

An individual route planned (some like the A.A.'s routing service, others prefer the R.A.C.)

Most of the roads of England, Wales and Scotland are patrolled by A.A. and R.A.C. uniformed service men on bicycles or motorcycles, or they stand controlling traffic at dangerous corners. They are prepared to give advice as to local conditions, inns, events of interest, roads, etc., and are also fully equipped to come to your rescue in case of any and every sort of minor emergency from running out of gas to punctures and many an internal difficulty. In addition, at the sight of the club or association insignia on your car, each stalwart officer of the road belonging to that organization salutes as if you were a member of the Royal Family. If you join both the A.A. and

the R.A.C., you not only are doubly certain of help when needed, but also for that additional \$5.25 you can feel like the Royal Family all day long! Otherwise the uniforms of the rival organization pass you by as if you didn't exist.

Both organizations have hundreds of roadside telephone boxes stationed throughout the country—a membership key means aid can be summoned in any emergency, day or night.

Which are only a few of the blessings accruing to members of the A.A. or R.A.C.

Garage services (it is well to patronize only such garages as display A.A. or R.A.C. signs) are uniformly much lower than in the United States.

Sunday driving, except near big cities, is as delightful, if not more so, than on week days. Make sure you have gas, oil, and air enough Saturday, as many garages and filling stations are closed Sundays. The A.A. and R.A.C. men, however, are on duty.

There is no speed limit on English roads. No one appeared to observe the old twenty mile an hour law. Under the new laws, as previously, anyone is liable to arrest who seems to endanger public safety, no matter what the speed. From our three months' experience we concluded the English have a most comfortable conception of fast driving—"collegiate atmosphere" on the roads seems entirely lacking. Even we used to pass cars!

II

FOR no particular reason except my own satisfaction I am listing various details of our summer which we found above the average enjoyable. They are set down most humbly—no one else might agree with our judgment in the least. Surely I have left out many names a better memory would have included. Certainly we failed to see many a treasure of the British Isles. Nor does the inclusion of a name signify perfection by any means. Looking back upon three months and over five thousand miles, this and that stand out as superior to the more average delights of the summer.

I

VILLAGES we especially admired within easy distance of London:

SOUTH		NORTH AND WEST	
Shere	Surrey	Grantchester	
Leigh	Surrey	Dorchester	between Oxford and London
		Ewelme	
Penshurst	Kent	Sonning	
Chiddingstone	Kent	Bray	
Goudhurst	Kent	Downey	
		Tring	near Oxford and the Chilterns
East Grinstead.....	Sussex	Wendover	
		Thame	

VILLAGES farther afield:

SOUTH OF LONDON

New Romney
Smallhythe
Pevensey
Petworth
Bignor

WILTSHIRE

Amesbury

COTSWOLDS

Burford
Chipping Campden
Broadway

CHESHIRE

Prestbury
Gawsworth

YORKSHIRE

Wensley
Oswaldkirk
Helmsley

CORNWALL

Fowey
Coverack
Manacaaan
St. Ives
Boscastle

DEVON

Clovelly

SOMERSET

Porlock

LINCOLNSHIRE

Blyth

NEAR PETERBOROUGH

Castor
Longthorpe
Thorney

NORFOLK

Castle Rising
Castle Acre

SUFFOLK

Mildenhall

2

Towns and cities we cared most about:

Rye	Sussex	Ripon	Yorkshire
Salisbury	Wilts	York	Yorkshire
Winchester	Hants	Stamford....	Lincolnshire and Northants
		Ely.....	Isle of Ely
Edinburgh	Scotland	Cambridge	
		Oxford	

INNS and hotels we enjoyed, listed in the order in which they came into our lives. Please bear in mind Parker tastes as to hostelries are simple—pay no attention to our list if you demand style.

8s. 6d. (\$2.12) or under for bed and breakfast—English breakfast:

Leicester Arms.....	Penshurst	Victoria.....	Llanbedr, Wales
Castle	Chiddingstone	Heversham	Heversham
		(very reasonable—8/6 for room, breakfast, high tea)	
Checquers	Pulborough	Ennerdale	Ennerdale Lake
Spread Eagle.....	Midhurst	Garve	Garve, Scotland
Whitesand Bay.....	Sennen Cove	Forbes Arms.....	Bridge of Alford
Channel View.....	Exmouth	Young's Family.....	York
(very simple—\$2.50 with full board, including tea)		(just across from cathedral)	
Corbet Arms.....	Market Drayton	Normanton.....	nr. Worksop
Royal Tyncornell.....	Tal-y-Llyn	Crown	Oakham

Over 8/6 up to 12s. (\$3.00); often the extra expense means yet more breakfast, in other words porridge, fish, eggs, coffee (and what!) or tea. About the toast we will not speak. Some few hotels function on the assumption that fruit for breakfast isn't poisonous.

Old George.....	Salisbury	Blair Atholl.....	Blair Atholl
Feathers	Ludlow	Hop Pole.....	Ollerton
Gorphwysfa	Llanberis Pass	Keys Hill	Wroxham
(no one asks you to pronounce it)		(an ex-private home in large gardens, very quiet)	
Pheasant.....	Bassenthwaite Lake	White Hart.....	Sonning
Gairloch	Gairloch, Scotland		

and the loveliest place of all—the Old House, Sandwich, 18/6 full board, including tea.

If you can afford 25/- a day (\$6.25) Taymouth Castle, Kenmore, Scotland has boating, golf, tennis, fishing on its own beautiful grounds, with, as mentioned in text, an orchestra for tea.

The easiest way to save money in Great Britain, since such a thing as a really cheap hotel is almost non-existent—join the Women's Rest Tour Association, 11 Pinckney Street, Boston, which will thereupon, if satisfied as to the impeccability of your character, furnish you with a non-transferable Foreign Lodging List. In that you will find addresses of recommended private homes taking a guest or so for bed and breakfast which will prove always cheaper than a hotel, and often much more pleasant. Or scout around for "Bed and Breakfast" signs of your own. Charges as a rule are from 5/- to 6/6 (\$1.25 to \$1.62).

While Parkers did not enter the following inns, either because of expense involved or the time of day or both, they looked so good on the outside I should like to see their names in print:

Mermaid	Rye	Drumnadrochit....	Scots fishing inn
New Inn.....	Manacaan	Angel	Blyth
George	Glastonbury	Angel	Grantham
(15th cent., this)		(13th cent., believe it or not)	
Peacock	Rowsey	George	Stamford
Beaufort Arms.....	Tintern	A new Elizabethan-looking inn in a charming new Elizabethan-looking corner in Norfolk, West Runton on the coast (golf).	
Royal	Capel Curig		
White Swan	Grasmere		

4

PLACES where we especially enjoyed afternoon tea, in addition to delightful teas in many of the inns listed, not to mention many nameless homes along the roadside:

Deepdene	near Dorking	Elizabethan Gate House..	Stokesay
Pilgrim House.....	Sandwich	Machie's Roof Garden..	Edinburgh
Lindridge Farm.....	Lamberhurst	(fine view of castle)	
Elizabeth Ann.....	Battle	Devonshire Tea Rooms....	Henley
Singing Kettle.....	Norwich	(with Pheasant, best tea in	
King's Hunting Lodge.....	Romsey	England)	

5

CASTLES much to our liking, for one reason or another:

Hurstmonceux	.....nr. Hastings	Cawdor	} .....	.Scotland
Bodiam	.....nr. Battle	Edinburgh		
Warwick	.....Warwickshire	Holyrood		
Raglan	.....Monmouth	Roslin		
Harlech	}	Alnwick	.....Northumberland	
Carnarvon	Wales	TattershallLincolnshire	
Conway					
(too crowded for us to go inside)					

6

MANOR houses along our route no one should miss (we missed a few of them ourselves):

*Sutton Place.....	Guildford	Compton Wynyates.	Warwickshire
*Penshurst	Penshurst	Moreton Old Hall	
*Knole	Sevenoaks	Congleton,	Cheshire
*Ightham Mote.....	nr. Sevenoaks	Stokesay	nr. Ludlow
*Leeds Castle	nr. Maidstone	Levens Hall	Lake District
Old House.....	Sandwich	Plas Mawr	Conway, Wales
Cowdray	Midhurst	Hatfield	nr. St. Albans
		*Ockwell's	nr. Bray

Those starred are within a short distance of London.

7

It is too difficult to be "choosey" about cathedrals—I list the ones we saw:

Canterbury	Kent	Hereford .....	..Herefordshire
Chichester	Sussex	York .....	.....Yorkshire
Winchester	Hants	Durham .....	.....Durham
Salisbury	Wilts	Lincoln .....	....Lincolnshire
Exeter	Devon	Peterborough .	.....Northants
Truro	Cornwall	Ely .....	.Cambridgeshire
Wells	Somerset	Oxford .....	....Oxfordshire
Bath	Somerset	St. Albans.....	Herts
Lichfield	Staffordshire		

and the outside of Rochester, Leominster and Carlisle.

8

NOR am I anything other than inclusive in the matter of abbeys; the text gives our favorites.

Battle	Sussex	Fountains	
Netley	Hants	Rievaulx	
Glastonbury	Somerset	Bolton	.Yorkshire
Tintern	Monmouth	York	
Melrose	} ...south Scotland	Kirkstead	Lincolnshire
Dryburgh		Castle Acre	Norfolk
Kelso			

9

BUT I dare show preference as to churches:

Abbey Church.....	Romsey	St. Botolph's.....	Boston
St. Mary's.....	Shrewsbury	St. Mary's.....	Walsingham
Abbey Church.....	Cartmel	St. Nicholas.....	East Dereham
All Saints.....	York	Parish Church.....	Castle Acre
(and almost every other church		All Saints.....	Oakham
in York)		Church	Mildenhall
Abbey Church.....	Selby	Church	Ewelme
Chapel	Clumber Park	(names unknown to C. S. P.)	

and of course the most beautiful of all, King's Chapel, Cambridge.

ATTRACTIVE seaside resorts are not easy to find—they approach too closely the offerings of Coney Island and Atlantic City, or are bleak and dreary. We found Exmouth in Devon above the average; and Mullion Cove and Sennen Cove in Cornwall delightful, with attractive (to Parkers) hotel accommodations—one hotel apiece—in both places. Perranporth further north in Cornwall was hard to drive through without stopping. Kyance Cove near Mullion sounds lovely—we didn't see it ourselves. Along the west and north coast of Norfolk we passed several seaside villages and towns which appeared to have possibilities, with a pleasant class of people about.

II

MISCELLANEOUS sights worth traveling far to see:

Stonehenge	Salisbury Plain	The Broads.....	Norfolk
St. Nicholas Priory.....	Exeter	Cambridge Backs..	Cambridgeshire
Edinburgh War Memorial		(consult guide-book for com-	
Abbotsford	Scotland	plete innocence of both)	
Strangers' Hall.....	Norwich	Thames, Henley to Maidenhead	
Bignor	} Roman villas		
Chedworth			

12

I HAVE attempted to list those stretches of English, Welsh and Scots roads which linger in the memory as especially lovely, in a summer of unendingly lovely roads. It is a presumptuous task, and has left me worn out and uneasy. I had no business trying to be selective about English, Welsh and Scots scenery:

Yet looking back over the summer certain miles do stand out:

Pulborough to Petworth.....	Sussex
Winchester to Petersfield.....	Hants
Devenport to Fowey	Cornwall
Clovelly to Lynmouth.....	Cornwall and Devon

Ross-Monmouth-Tintern	Wye Valley
Abergavenny to Bulith	Wales
Corvedale along Onny to Bishops Castle	Shropshire
Dolgelly to Barmouth	Wales
Bettws-y-coed to Pentre Foelas	Wales
Llanberis Pass	Wales
Loch Lomond	Scotland
Loch Awe to Oban	Scotland
Loch Creran	Scotland
Glen Nevis	Scotland
Inverness to Gairloch along Loch Maree	Scotland
Gairloch to Inverness along Loch Brom	Scotland
Dee Valley—Aberdeen to Braemar	Scotland
Bridge of Cally along Ardlie Water to Pitlochry and Blair Atholl	
Ballinluig along Tay Valley to Aberfeldy	Scotland
Loch Lubnaig	Scotland
Galashiels-Abbotsford-Melrose-Kelso-Coldstream ..	Scotland
Moor Cock Inn—Masham—Ripon	Yorkshire
York to Helmsley	Yorkshire
Boston to Grantham (A 152)	Lincolnshire
Stamford-Castor-Peterborough	Cambridgeshire

And then all over again I see stretch after stretch in Wales, in Scotland, in England not included.... Oh well, go over and drive every road in the British Isles for yourself!

13

As to the Norfolk Broads, all necessary information can be obtained from, and bookings can be made through, Blakes, Ltd., Broadland House, 22 Newgate Street, London, E.C.1. They publish a yearly booklet, "Norfolk Holidays Afloat," fully illustrated and full of Broads enlightenment, obtainable for 6d. The colored pictures of the Broads alone are worth four times the price. Boat rentals run from about \$25 a week (always reckoned Saturday to Saturday) for a yacht sleeping two; \$30 a week for a motor boat sleeping two. More comfortable craft range from about \$35 up. If you have good weather you'd feel \$350 was cheap at the price!

As mentioned in my text, everything for a Broads holiday can be purchased at Roy's, Wroxham.

14

IN the matter of books to enrich English traveling, of course the first purchase should be Muirhead's three Blue Guides of England, Wales and Scotland. They have an excellent list of suggested reading on each country which could hardly be improved upon. I should like to put in a good word for any books by S. Baring Gould, Cecil Aldin (his beautifully and humorously illustrated book on Old Manor Houses is a joy), A. G. Bradley, C. G. Harper, and Hilaire Belloc dealing with the British Isles. Of course Clara Laughlin's "So You're Going to England" is full of useful information. G. M. Trevelyan's History of England is invaluable, also there is a new (1929) History of Scotland by R. L. Mackie (I can vouch for its interest, though not for its accuracy, being very ignorant about historical exactitudes), R. A. Cram's "Ruined Abbeys in Great Britain" is not listed in Muirhead; John Dick's "Castles and Abbeys of Great Britain" is full of stories and legends.

Outside of histories, guide books and straight fiction there is Kipling's "Puck of Pook's Hill"; most enlightening small books by the Quennells (Marjorie and C. H. B.) called "Every Day Life Series"—nothing better could be read to give the background for earliest times on in Britain; also one book by them, profusely illustrated, as are all their books, "History of Everyday Things in England" (1966-1499) A. T. Quiller-Couch has edited four small volumes of much historical and human interest called "The Englishman." And of course never start out without the Pickwick Papers.

The country of today is delightfully dealt with by Karel Capek in his "Letters from England," which includes letters from Wales and Scotland. The most enjoyable books on England and Scotland of today are written by H. V. Morton, and now published in McBride's series of Dollar Travel Books—

"In Search of England," "In Search of Scotland," "The Call of England."

There are two small books which could well be added to one's library—again I am no person to pass on their historical accuracy: "The Eye Witness" by Belloc, which describes various historical events as if viewed on the spot, and H. A. V. Ransom's "Landmarks in English History."

If you are near a well-equipped public library and want a treat, ask for the two big illustrated volumes by Garner and Stratton on "Domestic Architecture of England during the Tudor Period."

To sum up again the cost of our own three months in a land which cannot be tarried in as inexpensively as the Continent:

We landed in London with a letter of credit for \$1000. We bought a new car on the repurchase system, which meant in reality we paid 30 percent of a new car, drove it for almost three months, with gas from 35c-40c an English gallon, and returned to London at the end of that time with \$100 still left on the letter of credit. In other words, \$900 for *all* expenses for two people for almost three months.

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